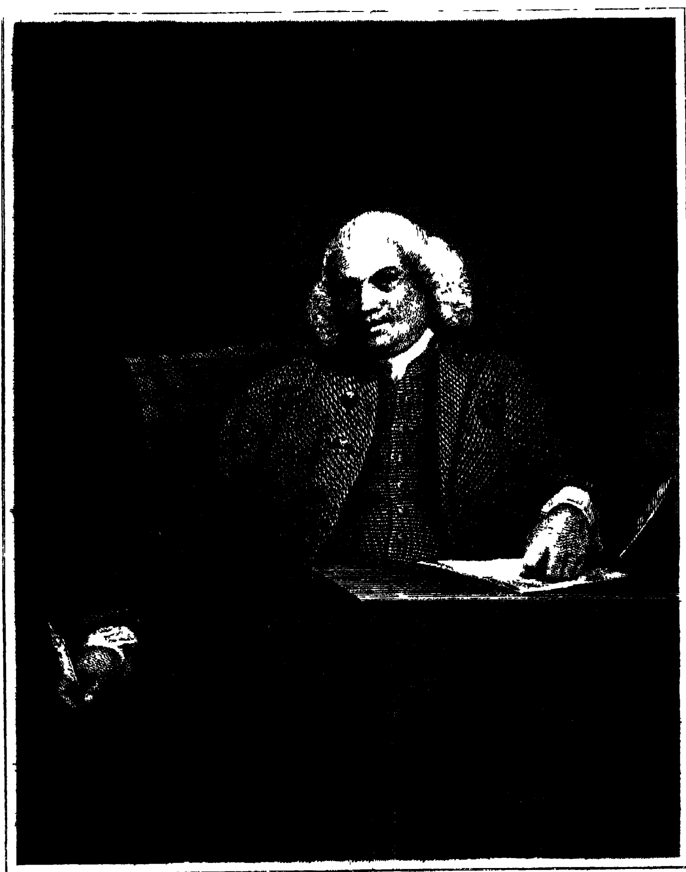


JOHNSON.

Engraved by E. Mitchell, from a Painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the possession of James Boswell, Esq

Published August, 1817, by R. Chapman, Glasgow.

A

JOURNEY

TO THE

WESTERN ISLANDS

OF

SCOTLAND.

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

WITH

Remarks

BY THE REV. DONALD M'NICOL, A.M.

OF LISMORE, ARGYLESHIRE.

EMBELLISHED WITH AN ELEGANT PORTRAIT OF JOHNSON

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1817.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is now upwards of forty years since Doctor Johnson's Tour to the Hebrides was given to the world. The strength and beauty of its language, the freedom and novelty of its remarks, and the great literary fame of its author, have concurred in establishing its title to rank as a Classic in our language. It is universally admitted, however, that the strong prejudices of the traveller, and his excusable ignorance of local circumstances and manners, have given a colouring to many of his observations which is highly objectionable. Hence, in the progress of this meritorious performance, much unreasonable satire is mingled with the unction of praise, and truth is frequently sacrificed at the shrine of detraction.

When this work was ushered to the notice of the public, Scotland, as might have been anticipated, found many defenders; but

the only work of merit, which was professedly published as an antidote to the misrepresentations of Johnson, is the volume of Remarks by the Rev. Mr. M'Nicol, of Lismore. The liveliness with which this volume is written, the zeal and research it displays, and the sarcasm with which it abounds, are at once proofs of the talents, the industry, and the patriotism of its author; and, notwithstanding some occasional sallies of indignant nationality, though the great Rambler himself were alive, he could hardly be displeased to see himself associated with so judicious and able an opponent.

Mr. M'Nicol's Remarks having become exceedingly scarce, the Publisher flatters himself that he offers a high gratification to the lovers of literature in general, to Scotsmen in particular, and to the just admirers of Johnson himself, when he presents them with an elegant edition of the Tour and the Remarks combined in one volume.

Glasgow, August, 1817.

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A

JOURNEY

TO THE

WESTERN ISLANDS

OF

SCOTLAND.

I HAD desired to visit the HEBRIDES, or Western Islands of Scotland, so long, that I scarcely remember how the wish was originally excited; and was in the autumn of the year 1773 induced to undertake the journey, by finding in Mr. Boswell a companion, whose acuteness would help my inquiry, and whose gaiety of conversation and civility of manners are sufficient to counteract the inconveniences of travel, in countries less hospitable than we have passed.

On the eighteenth of August we left EDINBURGH, a city too well known to admit description, and directed our course northward, along the eastern coast of Scotland, accompanied the

first day by another gentleman, who could stay with us only long enough to show us how much we lost at separation.

As we crossed the Frith of Forth, our curiosity was attracted by

Inch Keith,

a small island, which neither of my companions had ever visited, though, lying within their view, it had all their lives solicited their notice. Here, by climbing with some difficulty over shattered crags, we made the first experiment of unfrequented coasts. Inch Keith is nothing more than a rock covered with a thin layer of earth, not wholly bare of grass, and very fertile of thistles. A small herd of cows grazes annually upon it in the summer. It seems never to have afforded to man or beast a permanent habitation.

We found only the ruins of a small fort, not so injured by time but that it might be easily restored to its former state. It seems never to have been intended as a place of strength, nor was built to endure a siege, but merely to afford cover to a few soldiers, who perhaps had the charge of a battery, or were stationed to give signals of approaching danger. There is therefore no provision of water within the walls. though the spring is so near that it might have

been easily inclosed. One of the stones had this inscription:

MARIA REG. MDLXIV.

It has probably been neglected from the time that the whole island had the same king.

We left this little island with our thoughts employed a while on the different appearance that it would have made, if it had been placed at the same distance from London, with the same facility of approach; with what emulation of price a few rocky acres would have been purchased, and with what expensive industry they would have been cultivated and adorned.

When we landed, we found our chaise ready, and passed through Kinghorn, Kirkcaldy, and Cupar, places not unlike the small or straggling market-towns in those parts of England where commerce and manufactures have not yet produced opulence.

Though we were yet in the most populous part of Scotland, and at so small a distance from the capital, we met few passengers.

The roads are neither rough nor dirty; and it affords a southern stranger a new kind of pleasure to travel so commodiously without the interruption of toll-gates. Where the bottom is rocky, as it seems commonly to be in Scotland, a smooth

way is made indeed with great labour, but it never wants repairs; and in those parts where adventitious materials are necessary, the ground once consolidated is rarely broken; for the inland commerce is not great, nor are heavy commodities often transported otherwise than by water. The carriages in common use are small carts, drawn each by one little horse; and a man seems to derive some degree of dignity and importance from the reputation of possessing a two-horse cart.

St. Andrew's.

At an hour somewhat late we came to St. Andrew's, a city once archiepiscopal; where that university still subsists in which philosophy was formerly taught by Buchanan, whose name has as fair a claim to immortality as can be conferred by modern latinity, and perhaps a fairer than the instability of vernacular languages admits.

We found, that by the interposition of some invisible friend, lodgings had been provided for us at the house of one of the professors, whose easy civility quickly made us forget that we were strangers; and in the whole time of our stay we were gratified by every mode of kindness, and entertained with all the elegance of lettered hospitality.

In the morning we rose to perambulate a city, which only history shows to have once flourished, and surveyed the ruins of ancient magnificence, of which even the ruins cannot long be visible, unless some care be taken to preserve them; and where is the pleasure of preserving such mournful memorials? They have been till very lately so much neglected, that every man carried away the stones who fancied that he wanted them.

The cathedral, of which the foundations may be still traced, and a small part of the wall is standing, appears to have been a spacious and majestic building, not unsuitable to the primacy of the kingdom. Of the architecture, the poor remains can hardly exhibit, even to an artist, a sufficient specimen. It was demolished, as is well known, in the tumult and violence of Knox's reformation.

Not far from the cathedral, on the margin of the water, stands a fragment of the castle, in which the archbishop anciently resided. It was never very large, and was built with more attention to security than pleasure. Cardinal Beatoun is said to have had workmen employed in improving its fortifications, at the time when he was murdered by the ruffians of reformation, in the manner in which Knox has given what he himself calls a merry narrative.

The change of religion in Scotland, eager and

vehement as it was, raised an epidemical enthusiasm, compounded of sullen scrupulousness and warlike ferocity, which, in a people whom idleness resigned to their own thoughts, and who, conversing only with each other, suffered no dilution of their zeal from the gradual influx of new opinions, was long transmitted in its full strength from the old to the young, but by trade and intercourse with England, is now visibly abating, and giving way too fast to that laxity of practice, and indifference of opinion, in which men, not sufficiently instructed to find the middle point, too easily shelter themselves from rigour and constraint.

The city of St. Andrew's, when it had lost its archiepiscopal pre-eminence, gradually decayed: one of its streets is now lost; and in those that remain, there is the silence and solitude of inactive indigence and gloomy depopulation.

The university, within a few years, consisted of three colleges, but is now reduced to two; the college of St. Leonard being lately dissolved by the sale of its buildings, and the appropriation of its revenues to the professors of the two others. The chapel of the alienated college is yet standing, a fabric not inelegant of external structure: but I was always, by some civil excuse, hindered from entering it. A decent attempt, as I was since told, has been made to convert it into a

kind of greenhouse, by planting its area with shrubs. This new method of gardening is unsuccessful; the plants do not hitherto prosper. To what use it will next be put, I have no pleasure in conjecturing. It is something, that its present state is at least not ostentatiously displayed. Where there is yet shame, there may in time be virtue.

The dissolution of St. Leonard's College was doubtless necessary; but of that necessity there is reason to complain. It is surely not without just reproach, that a nation, of which the commerce is hourly extending, and the wealth increasing, denies any participation of its prosperity to its literary societies; and while its merchants or its nobles are raising palaces, suffers its universities to moulder into dust.

Of the two colleges yet standing, one is by the institution of its founder appropriated to divinity. It is said to be capable of containing fifty students; but more than one must occupy a chamber. The library, which is of late erection, is not very spacious, but elegant and luminous.

The doctor, by whom it was shown, hoped to irritate or subdue my English vanity, by telling me, that we had no such repository of books in England.

St. Andrew's seems to be a place eminently adapted to study and education, being situated

in a populous, yet a cheap country, and exposing the minds and manners of young men neither to the levity and dissoluteness of a capital city, nor to the gross luxury of a town of commerce, places naturally unpropitious to learning; in one the desire of knowledge easily gives way to the love of pleasure, and in the other, is in danger of yielding to the love of money.

The students, however, are represented as at this time not exceeding a hundred. Perhaps it may be some obstruction to their increase that there is no episcopal chapel in the place. I saw no reason for imputing their paucity to the present professors; nor can the expense of an academical education be very reasonably objected. A student of the highest class may keep his annual session, or as the English call it, his term, which lasts seven months, for about fifteen pounds, and one of lower rank for less than ten; in which, board, lodging and instruction are all included.

The chief magistrate resident in the university, answering to our vice-chancellor, and to the *rector magnificus* on the continent, had commonly the title of Lord Rector; but being addressed only as 'Mr. Rector' in an inauguratory speech by the present chancellor, he has fallen from his former dignity of style. Lordship was very liberally annexed by our ancestors to any station or character of dignity: they said, the 'Lord

General,' and 'Lord Ambassador;' so we still say, 'my Lord,' to the judge upon the circuit, and yet retain in our Liturgy, 'the Lords of the Council.'

In walking among the ruins of these religious buildings, we came to two vaults over which had formerly stood the house of the subprior. One of the vaults was inhabited by an old woman, who claimed the right of abode there, as the widow of a man whose ancestors had possessed the same gloomy mansion for no less than four generations. The right, however it began, was considered as established by legal prescription, and the old woman lives undisturbed. She thinks however that she has a claim to something more than sufferance; for as her husband's name was Bruce, she is allied to royalty, and told Mr. Boswell, that when there were persons of quality in the place, she was distinguished by some notice; that indeed she is now neglected, but she spins a thread, has the company of a cat, and is troublesome to nobody.

Having now seen whatever this ancient city offered to our curiosity, we left it with good wishes, having reason to be highly pleased with the attention that was paid us. But whoever surveys the world must see many things that give him pain. The kindness of the professors did not contribute to abate the uneasy remem-

brance of a university declining, a college alienated, and a church profaned and hastening to the ground.

St. Andrew's indeed has formerly suffered more atrocious ravages and more extensive destruction, but recent evils affect with greater force. We were reconciled to the sight of archiepiscopal ruins. The distance of a calamity from the present time seems to preclude the mind from contact or sympathy. Events long past are barely known; they are not considered. We read with as little emotion the violence of Knox and his followers, as the irruptions of Alaric and the Goths. Had the university been destroyed two centuries ago, we should not have regretted it; but to see it pining in decay, and struggling for life, fills the mind with mournful images and ineffectual wishes.

Aberbrothick.

As we knew sorrow and wishes to be vain, it was now our business to mind our way. The roads of Scotland afford little diversion to the traveller, who seldom sees himself either encountered or overtaken, and who has nothing to contemplate but grounds that have no visible boundaries, or are separated by walls of loose stone. From the banks of the Tweed to St.

Andrew's I had never seen a single tree, which I did not believe to have grown up far within the present century. Now and then about a gentleman's house stands a small plantation, which in Scotch is called a *policy*, but of these there are few, and those few all very young. The variety of sun and shade is here utterly unknown. There is no tree for either shelter or timber. The oak and the thorn is equally a stranger, and the whole country is extended in uniform nakedness, except that in the road between Kirkcaldy and Cupar, I passed for a few yards between two hedges. A tree might be a show in Scotland, as a horse in Venice. At St. Andrew's Mr. Boswell found only one, and recommended it to my notice; I told him that it was rough and low, or looked as if I thought so. "This," said he, "is nothing to another a few miles off." I was still less delighted to hear that another tree was not to be seen nearer. "Nay," said a gentleman that stood by, "I know but of this and that tree in the county."

The lowlands of Scotland had once undoubtedly an equal portion of woods with other countries. Forests are every where gradually diminished, as architecture and cultivation prevail by the increase of people and the introduction of arts. But I believe few regions have been denuded like this, where many centuries must have

passed in waste without the least thought of future supply. Davies observes, in his account of Ireland, that no Irishman had ever planted an orchard. For that negligence some excuse might be drawn from an unsettled state of life, and the instability of property; but in Scotland possession has long been secure, and inheritance regular, yet it may be doubted whether before the Union any man between Edinburgh and England had ever set a tree.

Of this improvidence no other account can be given than that it probably began in times of tumult, and continued because it had begun. Established custom is not easily broken, till some great event shakes the whole system of things, and life seems to recommence upon new principles. That before the Union the Scots had little trade and little money, is no valid apology; for plantation is the least expensive of all methods of improvement. To drop a seed into the ground can cost nothing, and the trouble is not great of protecting the young plant, till it is out of danger; though it must be allowed to have some difficulty in places like these, where they have neither wood for palisades, nor thorns for hedges.

Our way was over the Frith of Tay, where, though the water was not wide, we paid four shillings for ferrying the chaise. In Scotland the necessaries of life are easily procured, but

superfluities and elegancies are of the same price at least as in England, and therefore may be considered as much dearer.

We stopped a while at Dundee, where I remember nothing remarkable, and mounting our chaise again, came about the close of the day to Aberbrothick.

The monastery of Aberbrothick is of great renown in the history of Scotland. Its ruins afford ample testimony of its ancient magnificence: its extent might, I suppose, easily be found by following the walls among the grass and weeds, and its height is known by some parts yet standing. The arch of one of the gates is entire, and of another only so far dilapidated as to diversify the appearance. A square apartment of great loftiness is yet standing; its use I could not conjecture, as its elevation was very disproportionate to its area. Two corner towers particularly attracted our attention. Mr. Boswell, whose inquisitiveness is seconded by great activity, scrambled in at a high window, but found the stairs within broken, and could not reach the top. Of the other tower we were told that the inhabitants sometimes climbed it, but we did not immediately discern the entrance, and as the night was gathering upon us, thought proper to desist. Men skilled in architecture might do what we did not attempt: they might probably

form an exact ground-plot of this venerable edifice. They may from some parts yet standing conjecture its general form, and perhaps by comparing it with other buildings of the same kind and the same age attain an idea very near to truth. I should scarcely have regretted my journey, had it afforded nothing more than the sight of Aberbrothick.

Montrose.

Leaving these fragments of magnificence, we travelled on to Montrose,* which we surveyed in the morning, and found it well built, airy and clean. The townhouse is a handsome fabric with a portico. We then went to view the English chapel, and found a small church, clean to a degree unknown in any other part of Scotland, with commodious galleries, and, what was yet less expected, with an organ.

At our inn we did not find a reception such as we thought proportionate to the commercial opulence of the place; but Mr. Boswell desired me to observe that the innkeeper was an Englishman, and I then defended him as well as I could.

When I had proceeded thus far, I had opportunities of observing what I had never heard, that there were many beggars in Scotland. In

Edinburgh the proportion is, I think, not less than in London, and in the smaller places it is far greater than in English towns of the same extent. It must, however, be allowed, that they are not importunate, nor clamorous. They solicit silently, or very modestly, and therefore, though their behaviour may strike with more force the heart of a stranger, they are certainly in danger of missing the attention of their countrymen. Novelty has always some power; an unaccustomed mode of begging excites an unaccustomed degree of pity. But the force of novelty is by its own nature soon at an end; the efficacy of outcry and perseverance is permanent and certain.

The road from Montrose exhibited a continuation of the same appearances. The country is still naked, the hedges are of stone, and the fields so generally ploughed, that it is hard to imagine where grass is found for the horses that till them. The harvest, which was almost ripe, appeared very plentiful.

Early in the afternoon Mr. Boswell observed, that we were at no great distance from the house of Lord Monboddo. The magnetism of his conversation easily drew us out of our way, and the entertainment which we received would have been a sufficient recompence for a much greater deviation.

The roads beyond Edinburgh, as they are less frequented, must be expected to grow gradually rougher; but they were hitherto by no means incommodious. We travelled on with the gentle pace of a Scotch driver, who having no rivals in expedition, neither gives himself nor his horses unnecessary trouble. We did not affect the impatience we did not feel, but were satisfied with the company of each other, as well riding in the chaise, as sitting at an inn. The night and the day are equally solitary and equally safe; for where there are so few travellers, why should there be robbers?

Aberdeen.

We came somewhat late to Aberdeen, and found the inn so full, that we had some difficulty in obtaining admission, till Mr. Boswell made himself known: his name overpowered all objection, and we found a very good house and civil treatment.

I received the next day a very kind letter from Sir Alexander Gordon, whom I had formerly known in London, and, after a cessation of all intercourse for near twenty years, met here professor of physic in the King's College. Such unexpected renewals of acquaintance may be numbered among the most pleasing incidents of life.

The knowledge of one professor soon procured me the notice of the rest, and I did not want any token of regard, being conducted wherever there was any thing which I desired to see, and entertained at once with the novelty of the place, and the kindness of communication.

To write of the cities of our own island with the solemnity of geographical description, as if we had been cast upon a newly discovered coast, has the appearance of a very frivolous ostentation; yet as Scotland is little known to the greater part of those who may read these observations, it is not superfluous to relate, that under the name of Aberdeen are comprised two towns, standing about a mile distant from each other, but governed, I think, by the same magistrates.

Old Aberdeen is the ancient episcopal city, in which are still to be seen the remains of the cathedral. It has the appearance of a town in decay, having been situated, in times when commerce was yet unstudied, with very little attention to the commodities of the harbour.

New Aberdeen has all the bustle of prosperous trade, and all the show of increasing opulence. It is built by the water-side. The houses are large and lofty, and the streets spacious and clean. They build almost wholly with the granite used in the new pavement of the streets of London, which is well known not to want hardness, yet

they shape it easily. It is beautiful, and must be very lasting.

What particular parts of commerce are chiefly exercised by the merchants of Aberdeen, I have not inquired. The manufacture which forces itself upon a stranger's eye is that of knit-stockings, on which the women of the lower class are visibly employed.

In each of these towns there is a college, or in stricter language a university; for in both there are professors of the same parts of learning, and the colleges hold their sessions and confer degrees separately, with total independence of one on the other.

In Old Aberdeen stands the King's College, of which the first president was Hector Bocce, or Boethius, who may be justly reverenced as one of the revivers of elegant learning. When he studied at Paris, he was acquainted with Erasmus, who afterwards gave him a public testimony of his esteem, by inscribing to him a catalogue of his works. The style of Boethius, though, perhaps, not always rigorously pure, is formed with great diligence upon ancient models, and wholly uninfected with monastic barbarity. His history is written with elegance and vigour, but his fabulousness and credulity are justly blamed. His fabulousness, if he was the author of the fictions, is a fault for which no apology can

be made; but his credulity may be excused in an age when all men were credulous. Learning was then rising on the world; but ages so long accustomed to darkness, were too much dazzled with its light to see any thing distinctly. The first race of scholars in the fifteenth century, and some time after, were, for the most part, learning to speak, rather than to think, and were therefore more studious of elegance than of truth. The cotemporaries of Boethius thought it sufficient to know what the ancients had delivered. The examination of tenets and of facts was reserved for another generation.

Boethius, as president of the university, enjoyed a revenue of forty Scottish marks, about two pounds four shillings and sixpence of sterling money. In the present age of trade and taxes, it is difficult even for the imagination so to raise the value of money, or so to diminish the demands of life, as to suppose four and forty shillings a year an honourable stipend; yet it was probably equal, not only to the needs, but to the rank of Boethius. The wealth of England was undoubtedly to that of Scotland more than five to one, and it is known that Henry the Eighth, among whose faults avarice was never reckoned, granted to Roger Ascham, as a reward of his learning, a pension of ten pounds a year.

The other, called the Marischal College, is in

the new town. The hall is large and well lighted. One of its ornaments is the picture of Arthur Johnston, who was principal of the college, and who holds among the Latin poets of Scotland the next place to the elegant Buchanan.

In the library I was shown some curiosities; a Hebrew manuscript of exquisite penmanship, and a Latin translation of Aristotle's Politics by Leonardus Aretinus, written in the Roman character with nicety and beauty, which, as the art of printing has made them no longer necessary, are not now to be found. This was one of the latest performances of the transcribers, for Aretinus died but about twenty years before typography was invented. This version has been printed, and may be found in libraries, but is little read; for the same books have been since translated both by Victorius and Lambinus, who lived in an age more cultivated, but perhaps owed in part to Aretinus that they were able to excel him. Much is due to those who first broke the way to knowledge, and left only to their successors the task of smoothing it.

In both these colleges the methods of instruction are nearly the same; the lectures differing only by the accidental difference of diligence or ability in the professors. The students wear scarlet gowns, and the professors black, which is, I believe, the academical dress in all the

Scottish universities, except that of Edinburgh, where the scholars are not distinguished by any particular habit. In the King's College there is kept a public table, but the scholars of the Marischal College are boarded in the town. The expense of living is here, according to the information that I could obtain, somewhat more than at St. Andrew's.

The course of education is extended to four years, at the end of which those who take a degree, who are not many, become masters of arts; and whoever is a master may, if he pleases, immediately commence doctor. The title of doctor, however, was for a considerable time bestowed only on physicians. The advocates are examined and approved by their own body; the ministers were not ambitious of titles, or were afraid of being censured for ambition; and the doctorate in every faculty was commonly given or sold into other countries. The ministers are now reconciled to distinction, and as it must always happen that some will excel others, have thought graduation a proper testimony of uncommon abilities or acquisitions.

The indiscriminate collation of degrees has justly taken away that respect which they originally claimed, as stamps by which the literary value of men so distinguished was authoritatively denoted. That academical honours, or any others,

should be conferred with exact proportion to merit, is more than human judgment or human integrity have given reason to expect. Perhaps degrees in universities cannot be better adjusted by any general rule, than by the length of time passed in the public profession of learning. An English or Irish doctorate cannot be obtained by a very young man, and it is reasonable to suppose, what is likewise by experience commonly found true, that he who is by age qualified to be a doctor, has in so much time gained learning sufficient not to disgrace the title, or wit sufficient not to desire it.

The Scotch universities hold but one term or session in the year. That of St. Andrew's continues eight months, that of Aberdeen only five, from the first of November to the first of April.

In Aberdeen there is an English chapel, in which the congregation was numerous and splendid. The form of public worship used by the church of England, is in Scotland legally practised in licensed chapels, served by clergymen of English or Irish ordination, and by tacit connivance quietly permitted in separate congregations, supplied with ministers by the successors of the bishops who were deprived at the Revolution.

We came to Aberdeen on Saturday, August 21. On Monday we were invited into the town-

hall, where I had the freedom of the city given me by the Lord Provost. The honour conferred had all the decorations that politeness could add, and, what I am afraid I should not have had to say of any city south of the Tweed, I found no petty officer bowing for a fee.

The parchment containing the record of admission is, with the seal appending, fastened to a riband, and worn for one day by the new citizen in his hat.

By a lady who saw us at the chapel, the Earl of Errol was informed of our arrival, and we had the honour of an invitation to his seat, called Slanes Castle, as I am told, improperly, from the castle of that name, which once stood at a place not far distant.

The road beyond Aberdeen grew more stony, and continued equally naked of all vegetable decoration. We travelled over a tract of ground near the sea, which, not long ago, suffered a very uncommon and unexpected calamity. The sand of the shore was raised by a tempest in such quantities, and carried to such a distance, that an estate was overwhelmed and lost. Such and so hopeless was the barrenness superinduced, that the owner, when he was required to pay the usual tax, desired rather to resign the ground.

Slanes Castle.—The Buller of Buchan.

We came in the afternoon to Slanes Castle, built upon the margin of the sea, so that the walls of one of the towers seem only a continuation of a perpendicular rock, the foot of which is beaten by the waves. To walk round the house seemed impracticable. From the windows the eye wanders over the sea that separates Scotland from Norway, and when the winds beat with violence, must enjoy all the terrific grandeur of the tempestuous ocean. I would not for my amusement wish for a storm; but as storms, whether wished or not, will sometimes happen, I may say, without violation of humanity, that I should willingly look out upon them from Slanes Castle.

When we were about to take our leave, our departure was prohibited by the Countess till we should have seen two places upon the coast, which she rightly considered as worthy of curiosity, Dun Buy, and the Buller of Buchan, to which Mr. Boyd very kindly conducted us.

Dun Buy, which in Erse is said to signify the Yellow Rock, is a double protuberance of stone, open to the main sea on one side, and parted from the land by a very narrow channel on the other. It has its name and its colour from the dung of innumerable sea fowls, which in the

spring choose this place as convenient for incubation, and have their eggs and their young taken in great abundance. One of the birds that frequent this rock has, as we were told, its body not larger than a duck's, and yet lays eggs as large as those of a goose. This bird is by the inhabitants named a coot. That which is called coot in England, is here a cooter.

Upon these rocks there was nothing that could long detain attention, and we soon turned our eyes to the Buller or Bouilloir of Buchan, which no man can see with indifference, who has either sense of danger, or delight in rarity. It is a rock perpendicularly tubulated, united on one side with a high shore, and on the other rising steep to a great height, above the main sea. The top is open, from which may be seen a dark gulf of water which flows into the cavity, through a breach made in the lower part of the inclosing rock. It has the appearance of a vast well bordered with a wall. The edge of the Buller is not wide, and to those that walk round, appears very narrow. He that ventures to look downward, sees that if his foot should slip, he must fall from his dreadful elevation upon stones on one side, or into the water on the other. We however went round, and were glad when the circuit was completed.

When we came down to the sea, we saw some

boats, and rowers, and resolved to explore the Buller at the bottom. . We entered the arch, which the water had made, and found ourselves in a place, which, though we could not think ourselves in danger, we could scarcely survey without some recoil of the mind. The bason in which we floated was nearly circular, perhaps thirty yards in diameter. We were enclosed by a natural wall, rising steep on every side to a height which produced the idea of insurmountable confinement. The interception of all lateral light caused a dismal gloom. Round us was a perpendicular rock, above us the distant sky, and below an unknown profundity of water. If I had any malice against a walking spirit, instead of laying him in the Red Sea, I would condemn him to reside in the Buller of Buchan.

But terror without danger is only one of the sports of fancy, a voluntary agitation of the mind that is permitted no longer than it pleases. We were soon at leisure to examine the place with minute inspection, and found many cavities which, as the watermen told us, went backward to a depth which they had never explored. Their extent we had not time to try; they are said to serve different purposes. Ladies come hither sometimes in the summer with collations, and smugglers make them store-houses for clandestine merchandise. It is hardly to be doubted

but the pirates of ancient times often used them as magazines of arms, or repositories of plunder.

To the little vessels used by the northern rowers, the Buller may have served as a shelter from storms, and perhaps as a retreat from enemies; the entrance might have been stopped, or guarded with little difficulty, and though the vessels that were stationed within would have been battered with stones showered on them from above, yet the crews would have lain safe in the caverns.

Next morning we continued our journey, pleased with our reception at Slanes Castle, of which we had now leisure to recount the grandeur and the elegance; for our way afforded us few topics of conversation. The ground was neither uncultivated nor unfruitful; but it was still all arable. Of flocks or herds there was no appearance. I had now travelled two hundred miles in Scotland, and seen only one tree not younger than myself.

Banff.

We dined this day at the house of Mr. Frazer of Streichon, who showed us in his grounds some stones yet standing of a Druidical circle, and what I began to think more worthy of notice, some forest trees of full growth.

At night we came to Banff, where I remember nothing that particularly claimed my attention. The ancient towns of Scotland have generally an appearance unusual to Englishmen. The houses, whether great or small, are for the most part built of stones. Their ends are now and then next the streets, and the entrance into them is very often by a flight of steps, which reaches up to the second story; the floor which is level with the ground being entered only by stairs descending within the house.

The art of joining squares of glass with lead is little used in Scotland, and in some places is totally forgotten. The frames of their windows are all of wood. They are more frugal of their glass than the English, and will often, in houses not otherwise mean, compose a square of two pieces, not joining like cracked glass, but with one edge laid perhaps half an inch over the other. Their windows do not move upon hinges, but are pushed up and drawn down in grooves, yet they are seldom accommodated with weights and pulleys. He that would have his window open must hold it with his hand, unless, what may be sometimes found among good contrivers, there be a nail which he may stick into a hole, to keep it from falling.

What cannot be done without some uncommon trouble or particular expedient, will not

often be done at all. The incommodiousness of the Scotch windows keeps them very closely shut. The necessity of ventilating human habitations has not yet been found by our northern neighbours; and even in houses well built and elegantly furnished, a stranger may be sometimes forgiven, if he allows himself to wish for fresher air.

These diminutive observations seem to take away something from the dignity of writing, and therefore are never communicated but with hesitation, and a little fear of abasement and contempt. But it must be remembered, that life consists not of a series of illustrious actions, or elegant enjoyments; the greater part of our time passes in compliance with necessities, in the performance of daily duties, in the removal of small inconveniencies, in the procurement of petty pleasures; and we are well or ill at ease, as the main stream of life glides on smoothly, or is ruffled by small obstacles and frequent interruption. The true state of every nation is the state of common life. The manners of a people are not to be found in the schools of learning, or the palaces of greatness, where the national character is obscured or obliterated by travel or instruction, by philosophy or vanity; nor is public happiness to be estimated by the assemblies of the gay, or the banquets of the rich. The great mass of nations is

neither rich nor gay: they whose aggregate constitutes the people, are found in the streets and the villages, in the shops and farms; and from them, collectively considered, must the measure of general prosperity be taken. As they approach to delicacy, a nation is refined; as their conveniencies are multiplied, a nation, at least a commercial nation, must be denominated wealthy.

Elgin.

Finding nothing to detain us at Banff, we set out in the morning, and having breakfasted at Cullen, about noon came to Elgin, where, in the inn that we supposed the best, a dinner was set before us, which we could not eat. This was the first time, and except one, the last, that I found any reason to complain of a Scotch table; and such disappointments, I suppose, must be expected in every country, where there is no great frequency of travellers.

The ruins of the cathedral of Elgin afforded us another proof of the waste of reformation. There is enough yet remaining to show, that it was once magnificent. Its whole plot is easily traced. On the north side of the choir, the chapter-house, which is roofed with an arch of stone, remains entire; and on the south side, another mass of building, which we could not enter, is

preserved by the care of the family of Gordon; but the body of the church is a mass of fragments.

A paper was here put into our hands, which deduced from sufficient authorities the history of this venerable ruin. The church of Elgin had, in the intestine tumults of the barbarous ages, been laid waste by the irruption of a Highland chief, whom the bishop had offended; but it was gradually restored to the state of which the traces may be now discerned, and was at last not destroyed by the tumultuous violence of Knox, but more shamefully suffered to dilapidate by deliberate robbery and frigid indifference. There is still extant, in the books of the council, an order, of which I cannot remember the date, but which was doubtless issued after the reformation, directing that the lead, which covers the two cathedrals of Elgin and Aberdeen, shall be taken away, and converted into money for the support of the army. A Scotch army was in those times very cheaply kept; yet the lead of two churches must have borne so small a proportion to any military expense, that it is hard not to believe the reason alleged to be merely popular, and the money intended for some private purse. The order however was obeyed; the two churches were stripped, and the lead was shipped to be

sold in Holland. I hope every reader will rejoice that this cargo of sacrilege was lost at sea.

Let us not however make too much haste to despise our neighbours. Our own cathedrals are mouldering by unregarded dilapidation. It seems to be part of the despicable philosophy of the time to despise monuments of sacred magnificence, and we are in danger of doing that deliberately, which the Scots did not do but in the unsettled state of an imperfect constitution.

Those who had once uncovered the cathedrals never wished to cover them again; and being thus made useless, they were first neglected, and perhaps, as the stone was wanted, afterwards demolished.

Elgin seems a place of little trade, and thinly inhabited. The episcopal cities of Scotland, I believe, generally fell with their churches, though some of them have since recovered by a situation convenient for commerce. Thus Glasgow, though it has no longer an archbishop, has risen beyond its original state by the opulence of its traders; and Aberdeen, though its ancient stock had decayed, flourishes by a new shoot in another place.

In the chief street of Elgin, the houses jut over the lowest story, like the old buildings of timber in London, but with greater prominence;

so that there is sometimes a walk for a considerable length under a cloister, or portico, which is now indeed frequently broken, because the new houses have another form, but seems to have been uniformly continued in the old city.

Fores.—Calder.—Fort George.

We went forwards the same day to Fores, the town to which Macbeth was travelling when he met the weird sisters in his way. This to an Englishman is classic ground. Our imaginations were heated, and our thoughts recalled to their old amusements.

We had now a prelude to the Highlands. We began to leave fertility and culture behind us, and saw for a great length of road nothing but heath; yet at Fochabers, a seat belonging to the Duke of Gordon, there is an orchard, which in Scotland I had never seen before, with some timber-trees, and a plantation of oaks.

At Fores we found good accommodation, but nothing worthy of particular remark, and next morning entered upon the road on which Macbeth heard the fatal prediction; but we travelled on, not interrupted by promises of kingdoms, and came to Nairn, a royal burgh, which, if once it flourished, is now in a state of miserable decay;

but I know not whether its chief annual magistrate has not still the title of Lord Provost.

At Nairn we may fix the verge of the Highlands; for here I first saw peat fires, and first heard the Erse language. We had no motive to stay longer than to breakfast, and went forward to the house of Mr. Macaulay, the minister who published an account of St. Kilda, and by his direction visited Calder Castle, from which Macbeth drew his second title. It has been formerly a place of strength. The draw-bridge is still to be seen, but the moat is now dry. The tower is very ancient. Its walls are of great thickness, arched on the top with stone, and surrounded with battlements. The rest of the house is later, though far from modern.

We were favoured by a gentleman, who lives in the castle, with a letter to one of the officers at Fort George, which being the most regular fortification in the island, well deserves the notice of a traveller, who has never travelled before. We went thither next day, found a very kind reception, were led round the works by a gentleman, who explained the use of every part, and entertained by Sir Eyre Coote, the governor, with such elegance of conversation, as left us no attention to the delicacies of his table.

Of Fort George I shall not attempt to give

any account. I cannot delineate it scientifically, and a loose and popular description is of use only when the imagination is to be amused. There was every where an appearance of the utmost neatness and regularity. But my suffrage is of little value, because this and Fort Augustus are the only garrisons that I ever saw.

We did not regret the time spent at the fort, though in consequence of our delay we came somewhat late to Inverness, the town which may properly be called the capital of the Highlands. Hither the inhabitants of the inland parts come to be supplied with what they cannot make for themselves; hither the young nymphs of the mountains and valleys are sent for education, and as far as my observation has reached, are not sent in vain.

Inverness.

Inverness was the last place which had a regular communication by high roads with the southern counties. All the ways beyond it have, I believe, been made by the soldiers in this century. At Inverness therefore Cromwell, when he subdued Scotland, stationed a garrison, as at the boundary of the Highlands. The soldiers seem to have incorporated afterwards with the inhabitants, and to have peopled the place with an English race,

for the language of this town has been long considered as peculiarly elegant.

Here is a castle, called the Castle of Macbeth, the walls of which are yet standing. It was no very capacious edifice, but stands upon a rock so high and steep, that I think it was once not accessible, but by the help of ladders, or a bridge. Over against it, on another hill, was a fort built by Cromwell, now totally demolished; for no faction of Scotland loved the name of Cromwell, or had any desire to continue his memory.

Yet what the Romans did to other nations, was in a great degree done by Cromwell to the Scots; he civilized them by conquest, and introduced by useful violence the arts of peace. I was told at Aberdeen that the people learned from Cromwell's soldiers to make shoes and to plant kail.

How they lived without kail, it is not easy to guess; they cultivate hardly any other plant for common tables, and when they had not kail they probably had nothing. The numbers that go barefoot are still sufficient to show that shoes may be spared; they are not yet considered as necessaries of life; for tall boys, not otherwise meanly dressed, run without them in the streets; and in the islands the sons of gentlemen pass several of their first years with naked feet.

I know not whether it be not peculiar to the

Scots to have attained the liberal, without the manual arts, to have excelled in ornamental knowledge, and to have wanted not only the elegancies, but the conveniencies of common life. Literature, soon after its revival, found its way to Scotland, and from the middle of the sixteenth century, almost to the middle of the seventeenth, the politer studies were very diligently pursued. The Latin poetry of 'Deliciæ Poetarum Scotorum' would have done honour to any nation; at least till the publication of 'May's Supplement,' the English had very little to oppose.

Yet men thus ingenious and inquisitive were content to live in total ignorance of the trades by which human wants are supplied, and to supply them by the grossest means. Till the Union made them acquainted with English manners, the culture of their lands was unskilful, and their domestic life unformed; their tables were coarse as the feasts of Eskimeaux, and their houses filthy as the cottages of Hottentots.

Since they have known that their condition was capable of improvement, their progress in useful knowledge has been rapid and uniform. What remains to be done they will quickly do, and then wonder, like me, why that which was so necessary and so easy was so long delayed. But they must be for ever content to owe to the English that elegance and culture, which,

if they had been vigilant and active, perhaps the English might have owed to them.

Here the appearance of life began to alter. I had seen a few women with plaids at Aberdeen; but at Inverness the Highland manners are common. There is, I think, a kirk, in which only the Erse language is used. There is likewise an English chapel, but meanly built, where on Sunday we saw a very decent congregation.

We were now to bid farewell to the luxury of travelling, and to enter a country, upon which perhaps no wheel has ever rolled. We could indeed have used our post-chaise one day longer, along the military road to Fort Augustus, but we could have hired no horses beyond Inverness, and we were not so sparing of ourselves, as to lead them, merely that we might have one day longer the indulgence of a carriage.

At Inverness, therefore, we procured three horses for ourselves and a servant, and one more for our baggage, which was no very heavy load. We found in the course of our journey the convenience of having disencumbered ourselves, by laying aside whatever we could spare; for it is not to be imagined without experience, how in climbing crags, and treading bogs, and winding through narrow and obstructed passages, a little bulk will hinder, and a little weight will burden, or how often a man that has pleased him-

self at home with his own resolution, will, in the hour of darkness and fatigue, be content to leave behind him every thing but himself.

Loch Ness.

We took two Highlanders to run beside us, partly to show us the way, and partly to take back from the sea-side the horses, of which they were the owners. One of them was a man of great liveliness and activity, of whom his companion said, that he would tire any horse in Inverness. Both of them were civil and ready-handed. Civility seems part of the national character of Highlanders. Every chieftain is a monarch, and politeness, the natural product of royal government, is diffused from the laird through the whole clan. But they are not commonly dexterous; their narrowness of life confines them to a few operations, and they are accustomed to endure little wants more than to remove them.

We mounted our steeds on the 28th of August, and directed our guides to conduct us to Fort Augustus. It is built at the head of Loch Ness, of which Inverness stands at the outlet. The way between them has been cut by the soldiers, and the greater part of it runs along a rock,

levelled with great labour and exactness, near the water-side.

Most of this day's journey was very pleasant. The day, though bright, was not hot; and the appearance of the country, if I had not seen the Peak, would have been wholly new. We went upon a surface so hard and level, that we had little care to hold the bridle, and were therefore at full leisure for contemplation. On the left were high and steepy rocks shaded with birch, the hardy native of the north, and covered with fern or heath. On the right the limpid waters of Loch Ness were beating their bank, and waving their surface by a gentle agitation. Beyond them were rocks sometimes covered with verdure, and sometimes towering in horrid nakedness. Now and then we espied a little corn-field, which served to impress more strongly the general barrenness.

Loch Ness is about twenty-four miles long, and from one mile to two miles broad. It is remarkable that Boethius, in his description of Scotland, gives it twelve miles of breadth. When historians or geographers exhibit false accounts of places far distant, they may be forgiven, because they can tell but what they are told; and that their accounts exceed the truth may be justly supposed, because most men exaggerate to

others, if not to themselves: but Boethius lived at no great distance; if he never saw the lake, he must have been very incurious, and if he had seen it, his veracity yielded to very slight temptations.

Loch Ness, though not twelve miles broad, is a very remarkable diffusion of water without islands. It fills a large hollow between two ridges of high rocks, being supplied partly by the torrents which fall into it on either side, and partly, as is supposed, by springs at the bottom. Its water is remarkably clear and pleasant, and is imagined by the natives to be medicinal. We were told, that it is in some places a hundred and forty fathom deep, a profundity scarcely credible, and which probably those that relate it have never sounded. Its fish are salmon, trout, and pike.

It was said at Fort Augustus, that Loch Ness is open in the hardest winters, though a lake not far from it is covered with ice In discussing these exceptions from the course of nature, the first question is, whether the fact be justly stated. That which is strange is delightful, and a pleasing error is not willingly detected. Accuracy of narration is not very common, and there are few so rigidly philosophical, as not to represent as perpetual what is only frequent, or as constant. what is really casual. If it be

true that Loch Ness never freezes, it is either sheltered by its high banks from the cold blasts, and exposed only to those winds which have more power to agitate than congeal; or it is kept in perpetual motion by the rush of streams from the rocks that enclose it. Its profundity, though it should be such as is represented, can have little part in this exemption; for though deep wells are not frozen, because their water is secluded from the external air, yet where a wide surface is exposed to the full influence of a freezing atmosphere, I know not why the depth should keep it open. Natural philosophy is now one of the favourite studies of the Scottish nation, and Loch Ness well deserves to be diligently examined.

The road on which we travelled, and which was itself a source of entertainment, is made along the rock, in the direction of the loch, sometimes by breaking off protuberances, and sometimes by cutting the great mass of stone to a considerable depth. The fragments are piled in a loose wall on either side, with apertures left at very short spaces, to give a passage to the wintry currents. Part of it is bordered with low trees, from which our guides gathered nuts, and would have had the appearance of an English lane, except that an English lane is almost

always dirty. It has been made with great labour, but has this advantage, that it cannot, without equal labour, be broken up.

Within our sight there were goats feeding or playing. The mountains have red deer, but they came not within view; and if what is said of their vigilance and subtlety be true, they have some claim to that palm of wisdom, which the eastern philosopher, whom Alexander interrogated, gave to those beasts which live furthest from men.

Near the way, by the water-side, we espied a cottage. This was the first Highland hut that I had seen; and as our business was with life and manners, we were willing to visit it. To enter a habitation without leave, seems to be not considered here as rudeness or intrusion. The old laws of hospitality still give this license to a stranger.

A hut is constructed with loose stones, ranged for the most part with some tendency to circularity. It must be placed where the wind cannot act upon it with violence, because it has no cement; and where the water will run easily away, because it has no floor but the naked ground. The wall, which is commonly about six feet high, declines from the perpendicular a little inward. Such rafters as can be procured are then raised for a roof, and covered with heath,

which makes a strong and warm thatch, kept from flying off by ropes of twisted heath, of which the ends, reaching from the centre of the thatch to the top of the wall, are held firm by the weight of a large stone. No light is admitted, but at the entrance, and through a hole in the thatch, which gives vent to the smoke. This hole is not directly over the fire, lest the rain should extinguish it, and the smoke therefore naturally fills the place before it escapes. Such is the general structure of the houses in which one of the nations of this opulent and powerful island has been hitherto content to live. Huts, however, are not more uniform than palaces; and this which we were inspecting was very far from one of the meanest, for it was divided into several apartments; and its inhabitants possessed such property as a pastoral poet might exalt into riches.

When we entered, we found an old woman boiling goat's flesh in a kettle. She spoke little English, but we had interpreters at hand, and she was willing enough to display her whole system of economy. She has five children, of which none are yet gone from her. The eldest, a boy of thirteen, and her husband, who is eighty years old, were at work in the wood. Her two next sons were gone to Inverness to buy meal, by which oatmeal is always meant. Meal she con-

sidered as expensive food, and told us, that in spring when the goats gave milk, the children could live without it. She is mistress of sixty goats, and I saw many kids in an enclosure at the end of her house. She had also some poultry. By the lake we saw a potato garden, and a small spot of ground on which stood four shucks, containing each twelve sheaves of barley. She has all this from the labour of their own hands, and for what is necessary to be bought, her kids and her chickens are sent to market.

With the true pastoral hospitality, she asked us to sit down and drink whisky. She is religious, and though the kirk is four miles off, probably eight English miles, she goes thither every Sunday. We gave her a shilling, and she begged snuff; for snuff is the luxury of a Highland cottage.

Soon afterwards we came to the General's Hut, so called because it was the temporary abode of Wade, while he superintended the works upon the road. It is now a house of entertainment for passengers, and we found it not ill stocked with provisions.

Fall of Fiers.

Towards evening we crossed, by a bridge, the river which makes the celebrated Fall of Fiers. The country at the bridge strikes the imagination with all the gloom and grandeur of Siberian solitude. The way makes a flexure, and the mountains, covered with trees, rise at once on the left hand and in the front. We desired our guides to show us the fall, and, dismounting, clambered over very rugged crags, till I began to wish that our curiosity might have been gratified with less trouble and danger. We came at last to a place where we could overlook the river, and saw a channel torn, as it seems, through black piles of stone, by which the stream is obstructed and broken, till it comes to a very steep descent, of such dreadful depth, that we were naturally inclined to turn aside our eyes.

But we visited the place at an unseasonable time, and found it divested of its dignity and terror. Nature never gives every thing at once. A long continuance of dry weather, which made the rest of the way easy and delightful, deprived us of the pleasure expected from the Fall of Fiers. The river having now no water but what the springs supply, showed us only a swift current, clear and shallow, fretting over the asperities of

the rocky bottom; and we were left to exercise our thoughts, by endeavouring to conceive the effect of a thousand streams poured from the mountains into one channel, struggling for expansion in a narrow passage, exasperated by rocks rising in their way, and at last discharging all their violence of waters by a sudden fall through the horrid chasm.

The way now grew less easy, descending by an uneven declivity, but without either dirt or danger. We did not arrive at Fort Augustus till it was late. Mr. Boswell, who, between his father's merit and his own, is sure of reception wherever he comes, sent a servant before to beg admission and entertainment for that night. Mr. Trapaud, the governor, treated us with that courtesy which is so closely connected with the military character. He came out to meet us beyond the gates, and apologized that, at so late an hour, the rules of a garrison suffered him to give us entrance only at the postern.

Fort Augustus.

In the morning we viewed the fort, which is much less than that of St. George, and is said to be commanded by the neighbouring hills. It was not long ago taken by the Highlanders. But

its situation seems well chosen for pleasure, if not for strength; it stands at the head of the lake, and, by a sloop of sixty tons, is supplied from Inverness with great convenience.

We were now to cross the Highlands towards the western coast, and to content ourselves with such accommodations, as a way so little frequented could afford. The journey was not formidable, for it was but of two days, very unequally divided, because the only house where we could be entertained, was not further off than a third of the way. We soon came to a high hill, which we mounted by a military road, cut in traverses, so that as we went upon a higher stage, we saw the baggage following us below in a contrary direction. To make this way, the rock has been hewn to a level, with labour that might have broken the perseverance of a Roman legion.

The country is totally denuded of its wood, but the stumps both of oaks and firs, which are still found, show that it has been once a forest of large timber. I do not remember that we saw any animals, but we were told that, in the mountains, there are stags, roebucks, goats, and rabbits.

We did not perceive that this tract was possessed by human beings, except that once we saw a corn-field, in which a lady was walking

with some gentlemen. Their house was certainly at no great distance, but so situated that we could not descry it.

Passing on through the dreariness of solitude, we found a party of soldiers from the fort, working on the road, under the superintendence of a serjeant. We told them how kindly we had been treated at the garrison, and as we were enjoying the benefit of their labours, begged leave to show our gratitude by a small present.

Anoch.

Early in the afternoon we came to Anoch, a village in Glenmollison of three huts, one of which is distinguished by a chimney. Here we were to dine and lodge, and were conducted through the first room, that had the chimney, into another lighted by a small glass window. The landlord attended us with great civility, and told us what he could give us to eat and drink. I found some books on a shelf, among which were a volume or more of 'Prideaux's Connexion.'

This I mentioned as something unexpected, and perceived that I did not please him. I praised the propriety of his language, and was answered that I need not wonder, for he had learned it by grammar.

By subsequent opportunities of observation, I found that my host's diction had nothing peculiar. Those Highlanders that can speak English, commonly speak it well, with few of the words, and little of the tone by which a Scotchman is distinguished. Their language seems to have been learned in the army or the navy, or by some communication with those who could give them good examples of accent and pronunciation. By their Lowland neighbours they would not willingly be taught; for they have long considered them as a mean and degenerate race. These prejudices are wearing fast away; but so much of them still remains, that when I asked a very learned minister in the islands, which they considered as their most savage clans; "Those," said he, "that live next the Lowlands."

As we came hither early in the day, we had time sufficient to survey the place. The house was built like other huts, of loose stones; but the part in which we dined and slept was lined with turf and wattled with twigs, which kept the earth from falling. Near it was a garden of turnips and a field of potatoes. It stands in a glen, or valley, pleasantly watered by a winding river. But this country, however it may delight the gazer or amuse the naturalist, is of no great advantage to its owners. Our landlord told us of a gentleman who possesses lands, eighteen

Scotch miles in length, and three in breadth; a space containing at least a hundred square English miles. He has raised his rents, to the danger of depopulating his farms, and he sells his timber, and by exerting every art of augmentation, has obtained a yearly revenue of four hundred pounds, which for a hundred square miles is three halfpence an acre.

Some time after dinner we were surprised by the entrance of a young woman, not inelegant either in mien or dress, who asked us whether we would have tea. We found that she was the daughter of our host, and desired her to make it. Her conversation, like her appearance, was gentle and pleasing. We knew that the girls of the Highlands are all gentlewomen, and treated her with great respect, which she received as customary and due, and was neither elated by it, nor confused, but repaid my civilities without embarrassment, and told me how much I honoured her country by coming to survey it.

She had been at Inverness to gain the common female qualifications, and had, like her father, the English pronunciation. I presented her with a book, which I happened to have about me, and should not be pleased to think that she forgets me.

In the evening the soldiers, whom we had passed on the road, came to spend at our inn the

little money that we had given them. They had the true military impatience of coin in their pockets, and had marched at least six miles to find the first place where liquor could be bought. Having never been before in a place so wild and unfrequented, I was glad of their arrival, because I knew that we had made them friends, and to gain still more of their good-will, we went to them where they were carousing in the barn, and added something to our former gift. All that we gave was not much, but it detained them in the barn, either merry or quarrelling, the whole night, and in the morning they went back to their work, with great indignation at the bad qualities of whisky.

We had gained so much the favour of our host, that, when we left his house in the morning, he walked by us a great way, and entertained us with conversation both on his own condition, and that of the country. His life seemed to be merely pastoral, except that he differed from some of the ancient Nomades in having a settled dwelling. His wealth consists of one hundred sheep, as many goats, twelve milk cows, and twenty-eight beeves ready for the drover.

From him we first heard of the general dissatisfaction which is now driving the Highlanders into the other hemisphere; and when I asked

him whether they would stay at home, if they were well treated, he answered with indignation, that no man willingly left his native country. Of the farm, which he himself occupied, the rent had, in twenty-five years, been advanced from five to twenty pounds, which he found himself so little able to pay that he would be glad to try his fortune in some other place. Yet he owned the reasonableness of raising the Highland rents in a certain degree, and declared himself willing to pay ten pounds for the ground which he had formerly had for five.

Our host having amused us for a time, resigned us to our guides. The journey of this day was long, not that the distance was great, but that the way was difficult. We were now in the bosom of the Highlands, with full leisure to contemplate the appearance and properties of mountainous regions, such as have been, in many countries, the last shelters of national distress, and are every where the scenes of adventures, stratagems, surprises, and escapes.

Mountainous countries are not passed but with difficulty, not merely from the labour of climbing; for to climb is not always necessary: but because that which is not mountain is commonly bog, through which the way must be picked with caution. Where there are hills, there is much rain, and the torrents pouring

down into the intermediate spaces, seldom find so ready an outlet, as not to stagnate, till they have broken the texture of the ground.

Of the hills, which our journey offered to the view on either side, we did not take the height, nor did we see any that astonished us with their loftiness. Towards the summit of one, there was a white spot, which I should have called a naked rock, but the guides, who had better eyes, and were acquainted with the phenomena of the country, declared it to be snow. It had already lasted to the end of August, and was likely to maintain its contest with the sun, till it should be reinforced by winter.

The height of mountains philosophically considered, is properly computed from the surface of the next sea; but as it affects the eye or imagination of the passenger, as it makes either a spectacle or an obstruction, it must be reckoned from the place where the rise begins to make a considerable angle with the plain. In extensive continents the land may, by gradual elevation, attain great height, without any other appearance than that of a plane gently inclined, and if a hill placed upon such raised ground be described, as having its altitude equal to the whole space above the sea, the representation will be fallacious.

These mountains may be properly enough measured from the inland base; for it is not

much above the sea. As we advanced at evening towards the western coast, I did not observe the declivity to be greater than is necessary for the discharge of the inland waters.

We passed many rivers and rivulets, which commonly ran with a clear shallow stream over a hard pebbly bottom. These channels, which seem so much wider than the water that they convey would naturally require, are formed by the violence of wintry floods, produced by the accumulation of innumerable streams that fall in rainy weather from the hills, and bursting away with resistless impetuosity, make themselves a passage proportionate to their mass.

Such capricious and temporary waters cannot be expected to produce many fish. The rapidity of the wintry deluge sweeps them away, and the scantiness of the summer stream would hardly sustain them above the ground. This is the reason why in fording the northern rivers, no fishes are seen, as in England, wandering in the water.

Of the hills many may be called with Homer's Ida, "abundant in springs," but few can deserve the epithet which he bestows upon Pelion, by "waving their leaves." They exhibit very little variety; being almost wholly covered with dark heath, and even that seems to be checked in its growth. What is not heath is nakedness, a little

diversified by now and then a stream rushing down the steep. An eye accustomed to flowery pastures and waving harvests is astonished and repelled by this wide extent of hopeless sterility. The appearance is that of matter incapable of form or usefulness, dismissed by nature from her care, and disinherited of her favours, left in its original elemental state, or quickened only with one sullen power of useless vegetation.

It will very readily occur, that this uniformity of barrenness can afford very little amusement to the traveller; that it is easy to sit at home and conceive rocks, and heath, and waterfalls; and that these journeys are useless labours, which neither impregnate the imagination, nor enlarge the understanding. It is true, that of far the greater part of things, we must content ourselves with such knowledge as description may exhibit, or analogy supply; but it is true likewise, that these ideas are always incomplete, and that, at least, till we have compared them with realities, we do not know them to be just. As we see more, we become possessed of more certainties, and consequently gain more principles of reasoning, and found a wider basis of analogy.

Regions mountainous and wild, thinly inhabited, and little cultivated, make a great part of the earth, and he that has never seen them must live unacquainted with much of the face of na-

ture, and with one of the great scenes of human existence.

As the day advanced towards noon, we entered a narrow valley not very flowery, but sufficiently verdant. Our guides told us, that the horses could not travel all day without rest or meat, and entreated us to stop here, because no grass would be found in any other place. The request was reasonable, and the argument cogent. We therefore willingly dismounted, and diverted ourselves as the place gave us opportunity.

I sat down on a bank, such as a writer of romance might have delighted to feign. I had indeed no trees to whisper over my head, but a clear rivulet streamed at my feet. The day was calm, the air was soft, and all was rudeness, silence, and solitude. Before me, and on either side, were high hills, which by hindering the eye from ranging, forced the mind to find entertainment for itself. Whether I spent the hour well I know not; for here I first conceived the thought of this narration.

We were in this place at ease and by choice, and had no evils to suffer or to fear; yet the imaginations excited by the view of an unknown and untravelled wilderness are not such as arise in the artificial solitude of parks and gardens, a flattering notion of self-sufficiency, a placid in-

dulgence of voluntary delusions, a secure expansion of the fancy, or a cool concentration of the mental powers. The phantoms which haunt a desert are want, and misery, and danger; the evils of dereliction rush upon the thoughts; man is made unwillingly acquainted with his own weakness, and meditation shows him only how little he can sustain, and how little he can perform. There were no traces of inhabitants, except perhaps a rude pile of clods, called a summer hut, in which a herdsman had rested in the favourable seasons. Whoever had been in the place where I then sat, unprovided with provisions, and ignorant of the country, might, at least before the roads were made, have wandered among the rocks till he had perished with hardship, before he could have found either food or shelter. Yet what are these hillocks to the ridges of Taurus, or these spots of wilderness to the deserts of America?

It was not long before we were invited to mount, and continued our journey along the side of a loch, kept full by many streams, which with more or less rapidity and noise crossed the road from the hills on the other hand. These currents, in their diminished state, after several dry months, afford, to one who has always lived in level countries, an unusual and delightful spectacle; but in the rainy season, such as every winter may be

expected to bring, must precipitate an impetuous and tremendous flood. I suppose the way by which we went is, at this time, impassable.

Glensheals.

The loch at last ended in a river broad and shallow like the rest, but that it may be passed when it is deeper, there is a bridge over it. Beyond it is a valley called Glensheals, inhabited by the clan of Macrae. Here we found a village called Auknasheals, consisting of many huts, perhaps twenty, built all of dry stone, that is, stones piled up without mortar.

We had, by the direction of the officers at Fort Augustus, taken bread for ourselves, and tobacco for those Highlanders who might show us any kindness. We were now at a place where we could obtain milk, but must have wanted bread if we had not brought it. The people of this valley did not appear to know any English, and our guides now became doubly necessary as interpreters. A woman, whose hut was distinguished by greater spaciousness and better architecture, brought out some pails of milk. The villagers gathered about us in considerable numbers, I believe without any evil intention, but with a very savage wildness of aspect and manner. When our meal was over, Mr. Boswell

sliced the bread, and divided it amongst them, as he supposed them never to have tasted a wheaten loaf before. He then gave them little pieces of twisted tobacco, and among the children we distributed a small handful of halfpence, which they received with great eagerness. Yet I have been since told, that the people of that valley are not indigent; and when we mentioned them afterwards as needy and pitiable, a Highland lady let us know, that we might spare our commiseration; for the dame whose milk we drank had probably more than a dozen milk cows. She seemed unwilling to take any price, but being pressed to make a demand, at last named a shilling. Honesty is not greater where elegance is less. One of the by-standers, as we were told afterwards, advised her to ask more, but she said a shilling was enough. We gave her half-a-crown, and I hope got some credit by our behaviour; for the company said, if our interpreters did not flatter us, that they had not seen such a day since the old laird of Macleod passed through their country.

The Macraes, as we heard afterwards in the Hebrides, were originally an indigent and subordinate clan, and having no farms nor stock, were in great numbers servants to the Maclellans, who, in the war of Charles the First, took arms at the call of the heroic Montrose, and were, in one of

his battles, almost all destroyed. The women that were left at home, being thus deprived of their husbands, like the Scythian ladies of old, married their servants, and the Macraes became a considerable race.

The Highlands.

As we continued our journey, we were at leisure to extend our speculations, and to investigate the reason of those peculiarities by which such rugged regions as these before us are generally distinguished.

Mountainous countries commonly contain the original, at least the oldest race of inhabitants, for they are not easily conquered, because they must be entered by narrow ways, exposed to every power of mischief from those that occupy the heights; and every new ridge is a new fortress, where the defendants have again the same advantages. If the assailants either force the strait, or storm the summit, they gain only so much ground; their enemies are fled to take possession of the next rock, and the pursuers stand at gaze, knowing neither where the ways of escape wind among the steeps, nor where the bog has firmness to sustain them; besides that, mountaineers have an agility in climbing and descending, distinct

from strength or courage, and attainable only by use.

If the war be not soon concluded, the invaders are dislodged by hunger; for in those anxious and toilsome marches, provisions cannot easily be carried, and are never to be found. The wealth of mountains is cattle, which, while the men stand in the passes, the women drive away. Such lands at last cannot repay the expense of conquest, and therefore perhaps have not been so often invaded by the mere ambition of dominion, as by resentment of robberies and insults, or the desire of enjoying in security the more fruitful provinces.

As mountaineers are long before they are conquered, they are likewise long before they are civilized. Men are softened by intercourse mutually profitable, and instructed by comparing their own notions with those of others. Thus Cæsar found the maritime parts of Britain made less barbarous by their commerce with the Gauls. Into a barren and rough tract no stranger is brought either by the hope of gain or of pleasure. The inhabitants having neither commodities for sale, nor money for purchase, seldom visit more polished places, or if they do visit them, seldom return.

It sometimes happens that by conquest, inter-

mixture, or gradual refinement, the cultivated parts of a country change their language. The mountaineers then become a distinct nation, cut off by dissimilitude of speech from conversation with their neighbours. Thus in Biscay, the original Cantabrian, and in Dalecarlia, the old Swedish, still subsists. Thus Wales and the Highlands speak the tongue of the first inhabitants of Britain, while the other parts have received first the Saxon, and in some degree afterwards the French, and then formed a third language between them.

That the primitive manners are continued where the primitive language is spoken, no nation will desire me to suppose, for the manners of mountaineers are commonly savage, but they are rather produced by their situation than derived from their ancestors.

Such seems to be the disposition of man, that whatever makes a distinction produces rivalry. England, before other causes of enmity were found, was disturbed for some centuries by the contests of the northern and southern counties; so that at Oxford, the peace of study could for a long time be preserved only by choosing annually one of the proctors from each side of the Trent. A tract intersected by many ridges of mountains, naturally divides its inhabitants into petty nations, which are made by a thousand causes ene-

mies to each other. Each will exalt its own chiefs, each will boast the valour of its men, or the beauty of its women, and every claim of superiority irritates competition; injuries will sometimes be done, and be more injuriously defended; retaliation will sometimes be attempted, and the debt exacted with too much interest.

In the Highlands it was a law, that if a robber was sheltered from justice, any man of the same clan might be taken in his place. This was a kind of irregular justice, which, though necessary in savage times, could hardly fail to end in a feud; and a feud once kindled among an idle people, with no variety of pursuits to divert their thoughts, burnt on for ages, either sullenly glowing in secret mischief, or openly blazing into public violence. Of the effects of this violent judicature, there are not wanting memorials. The cave is now to be seen to which one of the Campbells, who had injured the Macdonalds, retired with a body of his own clan. The Macdonalds required the offender, and being refused, made a fire at the mouth of the cave, by which he and his adherents were suffocated together.

Mountaineers are warlike, because by their feuds and competitions they consider themselves as surrounded with enemies, and are always prepared to repel incursions, or to make them. Like the Greeks in their unpolished state, described by

Thucydides, the Highlanders, till lately, went always armed, and carried their weapons to visits and to church.

Mountaineers are thievish, because they are poor, and having neither manufactures nor commerce, can grow rich only by robbery. They regularly plunder their neighbours, for their neighbours are commonly their enemies; and having lost that reverence for property, by which the order of civil life is preserved, soon consider all as enemies, whom they do not reckon as friends, and think themselves licensed to invade whatever they are not obliged to protect.

By a strict administration of the laws, since the laws have been introduced into the Highlands, this disposition to thievery is very much repressed. Thirty years ago no herd had ever been conducted through the mountains, without paying tribute in the night to some of the clans; but cattle are now driven, and passengers travel, without danger, fear, or molestation.

Among a warlike people, the quality of highest esteem is personal courage, and with the ostentatious display of courage are closely connected promptitude of offence, and quickness of resentment. The Highlanders, before they were disarmed, were so addicted to quarrels, that the boys used to follow any public procession or ceremony, however festive or however solemn, in

expectation of the battle, which was sure to happen before the company dispersed.

Mountainous regions are sometimes so remote from the seat of government, and so difficult of access, that they are very little under the influence of the sovereign, or within the reach of national justice. Law is nothing without power; and the sentence of a distant court could not be easily executed, nor perhaps very safely promulgated, among men ignorantly proud, and habitually violent, unconnected with the general system, and accustomed to reverence only their own lords. It has therefore been necessary to erect many particular jurisdictions, and commit the punishment of crimes, and the decision of right, to the proprietors of the country who could enforce their own decrees. It immediately appears that such judges will be often ignorant, and often partial; but in the immaturity of political establishments no better expedient could be found. As government advances towards perfection, provincial judicature is perhaps in every empire gradually abolished.

Those who had thus the dispensation of law, were by consequence themselves lawless. Their vassals had no shelter from outrages and oppressions; but were condemned to endure, without resistance, the caprices of wantonness, and the rage of cruelty.

In the Highlands, some great lords had a hereditary jurisdiction over counties; and some chieftains over their own lands; till the final conquest of the Highlands afforded an opportunity of crushing all the local courts, and of extending the general benefits of equal law to the low and the high, in the deepest recesses and obscurest corners.

While the chiefs had this resemblance of royalty, they had little inclination to appeal, on any question, to superior judicatures. A claim of lands between two powerful lairds was decided like a contest for dominion between sovereign powers. They drew their forces into the field, and right attended on the strongest. This was, in ruder times, the common practice, which the kings of Scotland could seldom controul.

Even so lately as in the last years of king William, a battle was fought at Mulroy, on a plain a few miles to the south of Inverness, between the clans of Mackintosh and Macdonald of Keppoch. Colonel Macdonald, the head of a small clan, refused to pay the dues demanded from him by Mackintosh, as his superior lord. They disdained the interposition of judges and laws, and calling each his followers to maintain the dignity of the clan, fought a formal battle, in which several considerable men fell on the side of Mackintosh, without a complete victory to either.

This is said to have been the last open war made between the clans by their own authority.

The Highland lords made treaties, and formed alliances, of which some traces may still be found, and some consequences still remain as lasting evidences of petty regality. The terms of one of these confederacies were, that each should support the other in the right, or in the wrong, except against the king.

The inhabitants of mountains form distinct races, and are careful to preserve their genealogies. Men in a small district necessarily mingle blood by intermarriages, and combine at last into one family, with a common interest in the honour and disgrace of every individual. Then begins that union of affections, and co-operation of endeavours, that constitute a clan. They who consider themselves as ennobled by their family, will think highly of their progenitors, and they who through successive generations live always together in the same place, will preserve local stories and hereditary prejudices. Thus every Highlander can talk of his ancestors, and recount the outrages which they suffered from the wicked inhabitants of the next valley.

Such are the effects of habitation among mountains, and such were the qualities of the Highlanders, while their rocks secluded them from the rest of mankind, and kept them an un-

altered and discriminated race. They are now losing their distinction, and hastening to mingle with the general community.

Glenelg.

We left Auknasheals and the Macraes in the afternoon, and in the evening came to Ratikin, a high hill on which a road is cut, but so steep and narrow that it is very difficult. There is now a design of making another way round the bottom. Upon one of the precipices, my horse, weary with the steepness of the rise, staggered a little, and I called in haste to the Highlander to hold him. This was the only moment of my journey, in which I thought myself endangered.

Having surmounted the hill at last, we were told, that at Glenelg, on the sea-side, we should come to a house of lime, and slate, and glass. This image of magnificence raised our expectation. At last we came to our inn, weary and peevish, and began to inquire for meat and beds.

Of the provisions the negative catalogue was very copious. Here was no meat, no milk, no bread, no eggs, no wine. We did not express much satisfaction. Here however we were to stay. Whisky we might have, and I believe at last they caught a fowl and killed it. We had some bread, and with that we prepared ourselves

to be contented, when we had a very eminent proof of Highland hospitality. Along some miles of the way, in the evening, a gentleman's servant had kept us company on foot with very little notice on our part. He left us near Glenelg, and we thought on him no more till he came to us again, in about two hours, with a present from his master of rum and sugar. The man had mentioned his company, and the gentleman, whose name, I think, is Gordon, well knowing the penury of the place, had this attention to two men, whose names perhaps he had not heard, by whom his kindness was not likely to be ever repaid, and who could be recommended to him only by their necessities.

We were now to examine our lodging. Out of one of the beds, on which we were to repose, started up, at our entrance, a man black as a Cyclops from the forge. Other circumstances of no elegant recital concurred to disgust us. We had been frighted by a lady at Edinburgh, with discouraging representations of Highland lodgings. Sleep, however, was necessary. Our Highlanders had at last found some hay, with which the inn could not supply them, I directed them to bring a bundle into the room, and slept upon it in my riding coat. Mr. Boswell being more delicate, laid himself sheets, with hay over and under him, and lay in linen like a gentleman.

Skye.—Armidel.

In the morning, September the twentieth, we found ourselves on the edge of the sea. Having procured a boat, we dismissed our Highlanders, whom I would recommend to the service of any future travellers, and were ferried over to the isle of Skye. We landed at Armidel, where we were met on the sands by Sir Alexander Macdonald, who was at that time there with his lady, preparing to leave the island, and reside at Edinburgh.

Armidel is a neat house, built where the Macdonalds had once a seat, which was burnt in the commotions that followed the Revolution. The walled orchard, which belonged to the former house, still remains. It is well shaded by tall ash-trees, of a species, as Mr. Janes the fossilist informed me, uncommonly valuable. This plantation is very properly mentioned by Dr. Campbell, in his new account of the state of Britain, and deserves attention; because it proves that the present nakedness of the Hebrides is not wholly the fault of nature.

As we sat at Sir Alexander's table, we were entertained, according to the ancient usage of the north, with the melody of the bagpipe. Every thing in those countries has its history.

As the bagpiper was playing, an elderly gentleman informed us, that in some remote time, the Macdonalds of Glengary having been injured, or offended by the inhabitants of Culloden, and resolving to have justice or vengeance, came to Culloden on a Sunday, where, finding their enemies at worship, they shut them up in the church, which they set on fire; and this, said he, is the tune that the piper played while they were burning.

Narrations like this, however uncertain, deserve the notice of a traveller, because they are the only records of a nation that has no historians, and afford the most genuine representation of the life and character of the ancient Highlanders.

Under the denomination of Highlanders are comprehended in Scotland all that now speak the Erse language, or retain the primitive manners, whether they live among the mountains or in the islands; and in that sense I use the name, when there is not some apparent reason for making a distinction.

In Skye I first observed the use of brogues, a kind of artless shoes, stitched with thongs so loosely, that though they defend the foot from stones, they do not exclude water. Brogues were formerly made of raw hides, with the hair inwards, and such are perhaps still used in rude and remote parts; but they are said not to last

above two days. Where life is somewhat improved, they are now made of leather tanned with oak bark, as in other places, or with the bark of birch, or roots of tormentil, a substance recommended in defect of bark, about forty years ago, to the Irish tanners, by one to whom the parliament of that kingdom voted a reward. The leather of Skye is not completely penetrated by vegetable matter, and therefore cannot be very durable.

My inquiries about brogues, gave me an early specimen of Highland information. One day I was told, that to make brogues was a domestic art, which every man practised for himself, and that a pair of brogues was the work of an hour. I supposed that the husband made brogues as the wife made an apron, till next day it was told me, that a brogue-maker was a trade, and that a pair would cost half-a-crown. It will easily occur that these representations may both be true, and that, in some places, men may buy them, and in others make them for themselves; but I had both the accounts in the same house within two days.

Many of my subsequent inquiries upon more interesting topics ended in the like uncertainty. He that travels in the Highlands may easily saturate his soul with intelligence, if he will acquiesce

in the first account. The Highlander gives to every question an answer so prompt and peremptory, that scepticism itself is dared into silence, and the mind sinks before the bold reporter in unresisting credulity; but if a second question be ventured, it breaks the enchantment; for it is immediately discovered, that what was told so confidently was told at hazard, and that such fearlessness of assertion was either the sport of negligence, or the refuge of ignorance.

If individuals are thus at variance with themselves, it can be no wonder that the accounts of different men are contradictory. The traditions of an ignorant and savage people have been for ages negligently heard, and unskilfully related. Distant events must have been mingled together, and the actions of one man given to another. These, however, are deficiencies in story, for which no man is now to be censured. It were enough, if what there is yet opportunity of examining were accurately inspected, and justly represented; but such is the laxity of Highland conversation, that the inquirer is kept in continual suspense, and by a kind of intellectual retrogradation, knows less as he hears more.

In the islands the plaid is rarely worn. The law by which the Highlanders have been obliged to change the form of their dress, has, in all the

places that we have visited, been universally obeyed. I have seen only one gentleman completely clothed in the ancient habit, and by him it was worn only occasionally and wantonly. The common people do not think themselves under any legal necessity of having coats; for they say that the law against plaids was made by Lord Hardwicke, and was in force only for his life: but the same poverty that made it then difficult for them to change their clothing, hinders them now from changing it again.

The fillibeg, or lower garment, is still very common, and the bonnet almost universal; but their attire is such as produces, in a sufficient degree, the effect intended by the law, of abolishing the dissimilitude of appearance between the Highlanders and the other inhabitants of Britain; and if dress be supposed to have much influence, facilitates their coalition with their fellow-subjects.

What we have long used we naturally like; and therefore the Highlanders were unwilling to lay aside their plaid, which yet to an unprejudiced spectator must appear an incommodious and cumbersome dress; for hanging loose upon the body, it must flutter in a quick motion, or require one of the hands to keep it close. The Romans always laid aside the gown when they

had any thing to do. It was a dress so unsuitable to war, that the same word which signified a gown signified peace. The chief use of a plaid seems to be this, that they could commodiously wrap themselves in it, when they were obliged to sleep without a better cover.

In our passage from Scotland to Skye, we were wet for the first time with a shower. This was the beginning of the Highland winter, after which we were told that a succession of three dry days was not to be expected for many months. The winter of the Hebrides consists of little more than rain and wind. As they are surrounded by an ocean never frozen, the blasts that come to them over the water are too much softened to have the power of congelation. The salt lochs, or inlets of the sea, which shoot very far into the island, never have any ice upon them, and the pools of fresh water will never bear the walker. The snow that sometimes falls, is soon dissolved by the air, or the rain.

This is not the description of a cruel climate, yet the dark months are here a time of great distress; because the summer can do little more than feed itself, and winter comes with its cold and its scarcity upon families very slenderly provided.

Coriatachan in Skye.

The third or fourth day after our arrival at Armidel, brought us an invitation to the isle of Raasay, which lies east of Skye. It is incredible how soon the account of any event is propagated in these narrow countries by the love of talk, which much leisure produces, and the relief given to the mind in the penury of insular conversation by a new topic. The arrival of strangers at a place so rarely visited, excites rumour, and quickens curiosity. I know not whether we touched at any corner, where fame had not already prepared us a reception.

To gain a commodious passage to Raasay, it was necessary to pass over a large part of Skye. We were furnished therefore with horses and a guide. In the islands there are no roads, nor any marks by which a stranger may find his way. The horseman has always at his side a native of the place, who, by pursuing game, or tending cattle, or being often employed in messages or conduct, has learned where the ridge of the hill has breadth sufficient to allow a horse and his rider a passage, and where the moss or bog is hard enough to bear them. The bogs are avoided as toilsome at least, if not unsafe, and therefore

the journey is made generally from precipice to precipice; from which, if the eye ventures to look down, it sees below a gloomy cavity, whence the rush of water is sometimes heard.

But there seems to be in all this more alarm than danger. The Highlander walks carefully before, and the horse, accustomed to the ground, follows him with little deviation. Sometimes the hill is too steep for the horseman to keep his seat, and sometimes the moss is too tremulous to bear the double weight of horse and man. The rider then dismounts, and all shift as they can.

Journeys made in this manner are rather tedious than long. A very few miles require several hours. From Armidel we came at night to Coriatachan, a house very pleasantly situated between two brooks, with one of the highest hills of the island behind it. It is the residence of Mr. Mac-Kinnon, by whom we were treated with very liberal hospitality, among a more numerous and elegant company than it could have been supposed easy to collect.

The hill behind the house we did not climb. The weather was rough, and the height and steepness discouraged us. We were told that there is a cairne upon it. A cairne is a heap of stones thrown upon the grave of one eminent for dignity of birth, or splendour of achievements.

It is said, that by digging, an urn is always found under these cairnes: they must therefore have been thus piled by a people whose custom it was to burn the dead. To pile stones is, I believe, a northern custom, and to burn the body was the Roman practice; nor do I know when it was that these two acts of sepulture were united.

The weather was next day too violent for the continuation of our journey; but we had no reason to complain of the interruption. We saw in every place, what we chiefly desired to know, the manners of the people. We had company, and if we had chosen retirement, we might have had books.

I never was in any house of the islands, where I did not find books in more languages than one, if I had staid long enough to want them, except one from which the family was removed. Literature is not neglected by the higher rank of the Hebridians.

It need not, I suppose, be mentioned, that in countries so little frequented as the islands, there are no houses where travellers are entertained for money. He that wanders about these wilds, either procures recommendations to those whose habitations lie near his way, or, when night and weariness come upon him, takes the chance of

general hospitality. If he finds only a cottage, he can expect little more than shelter; for the cottagers have little more for themselves: but if his good fortune brings him to the residence of a gentleman, he will be glad of a storm to prolong his stay. There is, however, one inn by the sea-side at Sconsor, in Skye, where the postoffice is kept.

At the tables where a stranger is received, neither plenty nor delicacy is wanting. A tract of land so thinly inhabited, must have much wild-fowl; and I scarcely remember to have seen a dinner without them. The moor-game is every where to be had. That the sea abounds with fish, needs not be told, for it supplies a great part of Europe. The isle of Skye has stags and roebucks, but no hares. They send very numerous droves of oxen yearly to England, and therefore cannot be supposed to want beef at home. Sheep and goats are in great numbers, and they have the common domestic fowls.

But as here is nothing to be bought, every family must kill its own meat, and roast part of it somewhat sooner than Apicius would prescribe. Every kind of flesh is undoubtedly excelled by the variety and emulation of English markets; but that which is not best may be yet very far

from bad, and he that shall complain of his fare in the Hebrides, has improved his delicacy more than his manhood.

Their fowls are not like those plumped for sale by the poulterers of London, but they are as good as other places commonly afford, except that the geese, by feeding in the sea, have universally a fishy rankness.

These geese seem to be of a middle race, between the wild and domestic kinds. They are so tame as to own a home, and so wild as sometimes to fly quite away.

Their native bread is made of oats, or barley. Of oatmeal they spread very thin cakes, coarse and hard, to which unaccustomed palates are not easily reconciled. The barley cakes are thicker and softer; I began to eat them without unwillingness; the blackness of their colour raises some dislike, but the taste is not disagreeable. In most houses there is wheat flour, with which we were sure to be treated, if we staid long enough to have it kneaded and baked. As neither yeast nor leaven are used among them, their bread of every kind is unfermented. They make only cakes, and never mould a loaf.

A man of the Hebrides, for of the women's diet I can give no account, as soon as he appears in the morning, swallows a glass of whisky; yet

they are not a drunken race, at least I never was present at much intemperance; but no man is so abstemious as to refuse the morning dram, which they call a *skalk*. The word whisky signifies water, and is applied by way of eminence to strong water, or distilled liquor. The spirit drank in the north is drawn from barley. I never tasted it, except once for experiment at the inn in Inveraray, when I thought it preferable to any English malt brandy. It was strong, but not pungent, and was free from the empyreumatic taste or smell. What was the process I had no opportunity of inquiring, nor do I wish to improve the art of making poison pleasant.

Not long after the dram, may be expected the breakfast, a meal in which the Scots, whether of the lowlands or mountains, must be confessed to excel us. The tea and coffee are accompanied not only with butter, but with honey, conserves, and marmalades. If an epicure could remove by a wish, in quest of sensual gratifications, wherever he had supped, he would breakfast in Scotland.

In the islands, however, they do what I found it not very easy to endure. They pollute the tea-table by plates piled with large slices of Cheshire cheese, which mingles its less grateful odours with the fragrance of the tea.

Where many questions are to be asked, some

will be omitted. I forgot to inquire how they were supplied with so much exotic luxury. Perhaps the French may bring them wine for wool, and the Dutch give them tea and coffee at the fishing season, in exchange for fresh provision. Their trade is unconstrained; they pay no customs, for there is no officer to demand them; whatever, therefore, is made dear only by impost, is obtained here at an easy rate.

A dinner in the Western Islands differs very little from a dinner in England, except that in the place of tarts there are always set different preparations of milk. This part of their diet will admit some improvement. Though they have milk, and eggs, and sugar, few of them know how to compound them in a custard. Their gardens afford them no great variety, but they have always some vegetables on the table. Potatoes at least are never wanting, which, though they have not known them long, are now one of the principal parts of their food. They are not of the mealy, but the viscous kind.

Their more elaborate cookery, or made dishes, an Englishman, at the first taste, is not likely to approve, but the culinary compositions of every country are often such as become grateful to other nations only by degrees; though I have read a French author, who, in the elation of his heart,

says, that French cookery pleases all foreigners, but foreign cookery never satisfies a Frenchman.

Their suppers are like their dinners, various, and plentiful. The table is always covered with elegant linen. Their plates for common use are often of that kind of manufacture which is called cream coloured, or queen's ware. They use silver on all occasions where it is common in England, nor did I ever find a spoon of horn but in one house.

The knives are not often either very bright, or very sharp. They are indeed instruments of which the Highlanders have not been long acquainted with the general use. They were not regularly laid on the table, before the prohibition of arms, and the change of dress. Thirty years ago the Highlander wore his knife as a companion to his dirk or dagger, and when the company sat down to meat, the men who had knives, cut the flesh into small pieces for the women, who with their fingers conveyed it to their mouths.

There was, perhaps, never any change of national manners so quick, so great, and so general, as that which has operated in the Highlands, by the last conquest, and the subsequent laws. We came thither too late to see what we expected, a people of peculiar appearance, and a system of antiquated life. The clans retain little now of

their original character; their ferocity of temper is softened, their military ardour is extinguished, their dignity of independence is depressed, their contempt of government subdued, and their reverence for their chiefs abated. Of what they had before the late conquest of their country, there remain only their language and their poverty. Their language is attacked on every side. Schools are erected, in which English only is taught, and there were lately some who thought it reasonable to refuse them a version of the holy scriptures, that they might have no monument of their mother-tongue.

That their poverty is gradually abated, cannot be mentioned among the unpleasing consequences of subjection. They are now acquainted with money, and the possibility of gain will by degrees make them industrious. Such is the effect of the late regulations, that a longer journey than to the Highlands must be taken by him whose curiosity pants for savage virtues and barbarous grandeur.

Raasay.

At the first intermission of the stormy weather we were informed, that the boat, which was to convey us to Raasay, attended us on the coast.

We had from this time our intelligence facilitated, and our conversation enlarged, by the company of Mr. Macqueen, minister of a parish in Skye, whose knowledge and politeness give him a title equally to kindness and respect, and who, from this time, never forsook us till we were preparing to leave Skye, and the adjacent places.

The boat was under the direction of Mr. Malcolm Macleod, a gentleman of Raasay. The water was calm, and the rowers were vigorous, so that our passage was quick and pleasant. When we came near the island, we saw the laird's house, a neat modern fabric, and found Mr. Macleod, the proprietor of the island, with many gentlemen, expecting us on the beach. We had, as at all other places, some difficulty in landing. The crags were irregularly broken, and a false step would have been very mischievous.

It seemed that the rocks might, with no great labour, have been hewn almost into a regular flight of steps; and as there are no other landing places, I considered this rugged ascent as the consequence of a form of life inured to hardships, and therefore not studious of nice accommodations. But I know not whether, for many ages, it was not considered as a part of military policy to keep the country not easily accessible. The rocks are

natural fortifications, and an enemy climbing with difficulty was easily destroyed by those who stood high above him.

Our reception exceeded our expectations. We found nothing but civility, elegance, and plenty. After the usual refreshments, and the usual conversation, the evening came upon us. The carpet was then rolled off the floor; the musician was called, and the whole company was invited to dance, nor did ever fairies trip with greater alacrity. The general air of festivity, which predominated in this place, so far remote from all those regions which the mind has been used to contemplate as the mansions of pleasure, struck the imagination with a delightful surprise, analogous to that which is felt at an unexpected emersion from darkness into light.

When it was time to sup, the dance ceased, and six and thirty persons sat down to two tables in the same room. After supper the ladies sung Erse songs, to which I listened as an English audience to an Italian opera, delighted with the sound of words which I did not understand.

I inquired the subjects of the songs, and was told of one, that it was a love song, and of another, that it was a farewell composed by one of the islanders that was going, in this epidemical fury of emigration, to seek his fortune in Ame-

rica. What sentiments would rise, on such an occasion, in the heart of one who had not been taught to lament by precedent, I should gladly have known; but the lady, by whom I sat, thought herself not equal to the work of translating.

Mr. Macleod is the proprietor of the islands of Raasay, Rona, and Fladda, and possesses an extensive district in Skye. The estate has not, during four hundred years, gained or lost a single acre.

One of the old Highland alliances has continued for two hundred years, and is still subsisting between Macleod of Raasay, and Macdonald of Skye, in consequence of which, the survivor always inherits the arms of the deceased; a natural memorial of military friendship. At the death of the late Sir James Macdonald, his sword was delivered to the present laird of Raasay.

The family of Raasay consists of the laird, the lady, three sons, and ten daughters. For the sons there is a tutor in the house, and the lady is said to be very skilful and diligent in the education of her girls. More gentleness of manners, or a more pleasing appearance of domestic society, is not found in the most polished countries.

Raasay is the only inhabited island in Mr. Macleod's possession. Rona and Fladda afford

only pasture for cattle, of which one hundred and sixty winter in Rona, under the superintendance of a solitary herdsman.

The length of Raasay is, by computation, fifteen miles, and the breadth two. These countries have never been measured, and the computation by miles is negligent and arbitrary. We observed in travelling, that the nominal and real distance of places had very little relation to each other. Raasay probably contains near a hundred square miles. It affords not much ground, notwithstanding its extent, either for tillage or pasture; for it is rough, rocky, and barren. The cattle often perish by falling from the precipices. It is like the other islands, I think, generally naked of shade, but it is naked by neglect; for the laird has an orchard, and very large forest trees grow about his house. Like other hilly countries, it has many rivulets. One of the brooks turns a corn-mill, and at least one produces trouts.

In the streams or fresh lakes of the islands, I have never heard of any other fish than trouts and eels. The trouts which I have seen are not large; the colour of their flesh is tinged as in England. Of their eels I can give no account, having never tasted them; for I believe they are not considered as wholesome food.

It is not very easy to fix the principles upon which mankind have agreed to eat some animals, and reject others; and as the principle is not evident, it is not uniform. That which is selected as delicate in one country, is by its neighbours abhorred as loathsome. The Neapolitans lately refused to eat potatoes in a famine. An Englishman is not easily persuaded to dine on snails with an Italian, on frogs with a Frenchman, or on horseflesh with a Tartar. The vulgar inhabitants of Skye, I know not whether of the other islands, have not only eels, but pork and bacon in abhorrence, and accordingly I never saw a hog in the Hebrides, except one at Dunvegan.

Raasay has wild-fowl in abundance, but neither deer, hares, nor rabbits. Why it has them not, might be asked, but that of such questions there is no end. Why does any nation want what it might have? Why are not spices transplanted to America? Why does tea continue to be brought from China? Life improves but by slow degrees, and much in every place is yet to do. Attempts have been made to raise roebucks in Raasay, but without effect. The young ones it is extremely difficult to rear, and the old can very seldom be taken alive.

Hares and rabbits might be more easily obtain-

ed. That they have few or none of either in Skye, they impute to the ravage of the foxes, and have therefore set, for some years past, a price upon their heads, which, as the number was diminished, has been gradually raised, from three shillings and sixpence to a guinea, a sum so great in this part of the world, that in a short time Skye may be as free from foxes, as England from wolves. The fund for these rewards is a tax of sixpence in the pound, imposed by the farmers on themselves, and said to be paid with great willingness.

The beasts of prey in the islands are foxes, otters, and weasels. The foxes are bigger than those of England; but the otters exceed ours in a far greater proportion. I saw one at Armidel, of a size much beyond that which I supposed them ever to attain; and Mr. Maclean, the heir of Col, a man of middle stature, informed me that he once shot an otter, of which the tail reached the ground, when he held up the head to a level with his own. I expected the otter to have a foot particularly formed for the art of swimming; but upon examination, I did not find it differing much from that of a spaniel. As he preys in the sea, he does little visible mischief, and is killed only for his fur. White otters are sometimes seen.

In Raasay they might have hares and rabbits, for they have no foxes. Some depredations, such

as were never made before, have caused a suspicion that a fox has been lately landed in the island by spite or wantonness. This imaginary stranger has never yet been seen, and therefore, perhaps, the mischief was done by some other animal. It is not likely that a creature so ungentle, whose head could have been sold in Skye for a guinea, should be kept alive only to gratify the malice of sending him to prey upon a neighbour; and the passage from Skye is wider than a fox would venture to swim, unless he were chased by dogs into the sea, and, perhaps, than his strength would enable him to cross. How beasts of prey came into any islands is not easy to guess. In cold countries they take advantage of hard winters, and travel over the ice; but this is a very scanty solution; for they are found where they have no discoverable means of coming.

The corn of this island is but little. I saw the harvest of a small field. The women reaped the corn, and the men bound up the sheaves. The strokes of the sickle were timed by the modulation of the harvest-song, in which all their voices were united. They accompany, in the Highlands, every action, which can be done in equal time, with an appropriated strain, which has, they say, not much meaning; but its effects are regularity and cheerfulness. The ancient procelcusmatic

song, by which the rowers of galleys were animated, may be supposed to have been of this kind. There is now an oar-song used by the Hebridians.

The ground of Raasay seems fitter for cattle than for corn; and of black cattle, I suppose, the number is very great. The laird himself keeps a herd of four hundred, one hundred of which are annually sold. Of an extensive domain, which he holds in his own hands, he considers the sale of cattle as repaying him the rent, and supports the plenty of a very liberal table with the remaining product.

Raasay is supposed to have been very long inhabited. On one side of it they show caves into which the rude nations of the first ages retreated from the weather. These dreary vaults might have had other uses. There is still a cavity near the house called the oar-cave, in which the seamen, after one of those piratical expeditions, which in rougher times was very frequent, used, as tradition tells, to hide their oars. This hollow was near the sea, that nothing so necessary might be far to be fetched; and it was secret, that enemies, if they landed, could find nothing. Yet it is not very evident of what use it was to hide their oars from those, who, if they were masters of the coast, could take away their boats.

A proof much stronger of the distance at which

the first possessors of this island lived from the present time, is afforded by the stone heads of arrows, which are very frequently picked up. The people call them elf-bolts, and believe that the fairies shoot them at the cattle. They nearly resemble those which Mr. Banks has lately brought from the savage countries in the Pacific Ocean, and must have been made by a nation to which the use of metals was unknown.

The number of this little community has never been counted by its ruler, nor have I obtained any positive account, consistent with the result of political computation. Not many years ago, the late laird led out one hundred men upon a military expedition. The sixth part of a people is supposed capable of bearing arms: Raasay had therefore six hundred inhabitants. But because it is not likely, that every man able to serve in the field would follow the summons, or that the chief would leave his lands totally defenceless, or take away all the hands qualified for labour, let it be supposed, that half as many might be permitted to stay at home. The whole number will then be nine hundred, or nine to a square mile; a degree of populousness greater than those tracts of desolation can often show. They are content with their country, and faithful to their chiefs, and yet uninfected with the fever of migration.

Near the house at Raasay is a chapel, unroofed and ruinous, which has long been used only as a place of burial. About the churches in the islands are small squares enclosed with stone, which belong to particular families, as repositories for the dead. At Raasay there is one, I think, for the proprietor, and one for some collateral house.

It is told by Martin, that at the death of the lady of the island, it has been here the custom to erect a cross. This we found not to be true. The stones that stand about the chapel at a small distance, some of which perhaps have crosses cut upon them, are believed to have been, not funeral monuments, but the ancient boundaries of the sanctuary, or consecrated ground.

Martin was a man not illiterate: he was an inhabitant of Skye, and therefore was within reach of intelligence, and with no great difficulty might have visited the places which he undertakes to describe; yet with all his opportunities, he has often suffered himself to be deceived. He lived in the last century, when the chiefs of the clans had lost little of their original influence. The mountains were yet unpenetrated, no inlet was opened to foreign novelties, and the feudal institutions operated upon life with their full force. He might therefore have displayed a series of subordination and a form of government, which in

more luminous and improved regions, have been long forgotten, and have delighted his readers with many uncouth customs that are now disused, and wild opinions that prevail no longer. But he probably had not knowledge of the world sufficient to qualify him for judging what would deserve or gain the attention of mankind. The mode of life which was familiar to himself, he did not suppose unknown to others, nor imagined that he could give pleasure by telling that of which it was, in his little country, impossible to be ignorant.

What he has neglected cannot now be performed. In nations, where there is hardly the use of letters, what is once out of sight is lost for ever. They think but little, and of their few thoughts, none are wasted on the past, in which they are neither interested by fear nor hope. Their only registers are stated observances and practical representations. For this reason an age of ignorance is an age of ceremony. Pageants, and processions, and commemorations, gradually shrink away, as better methods come into use of recording events, and preserving rights.

It is not only in Raasay that the chapel is unroofed and useless: through the few islands which we visited we neither saw nor heard of any house of prayer, except in Skye, that was not in ruins.

The malignant influence of Calvinism has blasted ceremony and decency together; and if the remembrance of Papal superstition is obliterated, the monuments of Papal piety are likewise effaced.

It has been, for many years, popular to talk of the lazy devotion of the Romish clergy; over the sleepy laziness of men that erected churches, we may indulge our superiority with a new triumph, by comparing it with the fervid activity of those who suffer them to fall.

Of the destruction of churches, the decay of religion must in time be the consequence; for while the public acts of the ministry are now performed in houses, a very small number can be present; and as the greater part of the islanders make no use of books, all must necessarily live in total ignorance who want the opportunity of vocal instruction.

From these remains of ancient sanctity, which are every where to be found, it has been conjectured, that, for the last two centuries, the inhabitants of the islands have decreased in number. This argument, which supposes that the churches have been suffered to fall, only because they were no longer necessary, would have some force, if the houses of worship still remaining were sufficient for the people. But since they have now no

churches at all, these venerable fragments do not prove the people of former times to have been more numerous, but to have been more devout. If the inhabitants were doubled, with their present principles, it appears not that any provision for public worship would be made. Where the religion of a country enforces consecrated buildings, the number of those buildings may be supposed to afford some indication, however uncertain, of the populousness of the place; but where, by a change of manners, a nation is contented to live without them, their decay implies no diminution of inhabitants.

Some of these dilapidations are said to be found in islands now uninhabited; but I doubt whether we can thence infer that they were ever peopled. The religion of the middle age is well known to have placed too much hope in lonely austerities. Voluntary solitude was the great art of propitiation, by which crimes were effaced, and conscience was appeased; it is therefore not unlikely, that oratories were often built in places where retirement was sure to have no disturbance.

Raasay has little that can detain a traveller, except the laird and his family; but their power wants no auxiliaries. Such a seat of hospitality, amidst the winds and waters, fills the imagination with a delightful contrariety of images. Without

is the rough ocean and the rocky land, the beating billows and the howling storm: within is plenty and elegance, beauty and gaiety, the song and the dance. In Raasay, if I could have found an Ulysses, I had fancied a Phæacia.

Dunvegan.

At Raasay, by good fortune, Macleod, so the chief of the clan is called, was paying a visit, and by him we were invited to his seat at Dunvegan. Raasay has a stout boat, built in Norway, in which, with six oars, he conveyed us back to Skye. We landed at Port Re, so called, because James the Fifth of Scotland, who had curiosity to visit the islands, came into it. The port is made by an inlet of the sea, deep and narrow, where a ship lay waiting to dispeople Skye, by carrying the natives away to America.

In coasting Skye, we passed by the cavern in which it was the custom, as Martin relates, to catch birds in the night, by making a fire at the entrance. This practice is disused; for the birds, as is known often to happen, have changed their haunts.

Here we dined at a public house, I believe the only inn of the island, and having mounted our horses, travelled in the manner already described.

till we came to Kingsborough, a place distinguished by that name, because the king lodged here when he landed at Port Re. We were entertained with the usual hospitality by Mr. Macdonald and his lady Flora Macdonald, a name that will be mentioned in history, and if courage and fidelity be virtues, mentioned with honour. She is a woman of middle stature, soft features, gentle manners, and elegant presence.

In the morning we sent our horses round a promontory to meet us, and spared ourselves part of the day's fatigue, by crossing an arm of the sea. We had at last some difficulty in coming to Dunvegan; for our way led over an extensive moor, where every step was to be taken with caution, and we were often obliged to alight, because the ground could not be trusted. In travelling this watery flat, I perceived that it had a visible declivity, and might without much expense or difficulty be drained. But difficulty and expense are relative terms, which have different meanings in different places.

To Dunvegan we came, very willing to be at rest, and found our fatigue amply recompensed by our reception. Lady Macleod, who had lived many years in England, was newly come hither with her son and four daughters, who knew all the arts of southern elegance, and all the modes

of English economy. Here therefore we settled, and did not spoil the present hour with thoughts of departure.

Dunvegan is a rocky prominence, that juts out into a bay, on the west side of Skye. The house, which is the principal seat of Macleod, is partly old and partly modern; it is built upon the rock, and looks upon the water. It forms two sides of a small square: on the third side is the skeleton of a castle of unknown antiquity, supposed to have been a Norwegian fortress, when the Danes were masters of the islands. It is so nearly entire, that it might easily have been made habitable, were there not an ominous tradition in the family, that the owner shall not long outlive the reparation. The grandfather of the present laird, in defiance of prediction, began the work, but desisted in a little time, and applied his money to worse uses.

As the inhabitants of the Hebrides lived, for many ages, in continual expectation of hostilities, the chief of every clan resided in a fortress. This house was accessible only from the water, till the last possessor opened an entrance by stairs upon the land.

They had formerly reason to be afraid, not only of declared wars and authorized invaders, or of roving pirates, which, in the northern seas, must have been very common; but of inroads

and insults from rival clans, who, in the plenitude of feudal independence, asked no leave of their sovereign to make war on one another. Skye has been ravaged by a feud between the two mighty powers of Macdonald and Macleod. Macdonald having married a Macleod, upon some discontent dismissed her, perhaps because she had brought him no children. Before the reign of James the Fifth, a Highland laird made a trial of his wife for a certain time, and if she did not please him, he was then at liberty to send her away. This however must always have offended, and Macleod resenting the injury, whatever were its circumstances, declared, that the wedding had been solemnized without a bonfire, but that the separation should be better illuminated; and raising a little army, set fire to the territories of Macdonald, who returned the visit, and prevailed.

Another story may show the disorderly state of insular neighbourhood. The inhabitants of the isle of Egg, meeting a boat manned by Macleods, tied the crew hand and foot, and set them adrift. Macleod landed upon Egg, and demanded the offenders; but the inhabitants refusing to surrender them, retreated to a cavern, into which they thought their enemies unlikely to follow them. Macleod choked them with smoke, and left them lying dead by families as they stood.

Here the violence of the weather confined us for some time, not at all to our discontent or inconvenience. We would indeed very willingly have visited the islands, which might be seen from the house scattered in the sea, and I was particularly desirous to have viewed Isay; but the storms did not permit us to launch a boat, and we were condemned to listen in idleness to the wind, except when we were better engaged by listening to the ladies.

We had here more wind than waves, and suffered the severity of a tempest, without enjoying its magnificence. The sea being broken by the multitude of islands, does not roar with so much noise, nor beat the storm with such foamy violence, as I have remarked on the coast of Sussex. Though, while I was in the Hebrides, the wind was extremely turbulent, I never saw very high billows.

The country about Dunvegan is rough and barren. There are no trees, except in the orchard, which is a low sheltered spot, surrounded with a wall.

When this house was intended to sustain a siege, a well was made in the court, by boring the rock downwards, till water was found, which though so near to the sea, I have not heard mentioned as brackish, though it has some hardness,

or other qualities, which make it less fit for use; and the family is now better supplied from a stream, which runs by the rock, from two pleasing waterfalls.

Here we saw some traces of former manners, and heard some standing traditions. In the house is kept an ox's horn, hollowed so as to hold perhaps two quarts, which the heir of Macleod was expected to swallow at one draught, as a test of his manhood, before he was permitted to bear arms, or could claim a seat among the men. It is held that the return of the laird to Dunvegan, after any considerable absence, produces a plentiful capture of herrings; and that, if any woman crosses the water to the opposite island, the herrings will desert the coast. Boethius tells the same of some other place. This tradition is not uniform Some hold that no woman may pass, and others that none may pass but a Macleod.

Among other guests, which the hospitality of Dunvegan brought to the table, a visit was paid by the laird and lady of a small island south of Skye, of which the proper name is Muack, which signifies swine. It is commonly called Muck, which the proprietor not liking, has endeavoured, without effect, to change to Monk. It is usual to call gentlemen in Scotland by the name of their possessions, as Raasay, Bernera, Loch Buy, a prac-

tice necessary in countries inhabited by clans, where all that live in the same territory have one name, and must be therefore discriminated by some addition. This gentleman, whose name, I think, is Maclean, should be regularly called Muck; but the appellation, which he thinks too coarse for his island, he would like still less for himself, and he is therefore addressed by the title of Isle of Muck.

This little island, however it be named, is of considerable value. It is two English miles long, and three quarters of a mile broad, and consequently contains only nine hundred and sixty English acres. It is chiefly arable. Half of this little dominion the laird retains in his own hand, and on the other half, live one hundred and sixty persons, who pay their rent by exported corn. What rent they pay we were not told, and could not decently inquire. The proportion of the people to the land is such, as the most fertile countries do not commonly maintain.

The laird having all his people under his immediate view, seems to be very attentive to their happiness. The devastation of the smallpox, when it visits places where it comes seldom, is well known. He has disarmed it of its terror at Muack, by inoculating eighty of his people. The expense was two shillings and sixpence a head. Many trades they cannot have among them, but

upon occasion, he fetches a smith from the isle of Egg, and has a tailor from the main land, six times a year. This island well deserved to be seen, but the laird's absence left us no opportunity.

Every inhabited island has its appendant and subordinate islets. Muck, however small, has yet others smaller about it, one of which has only ground sufficient to afford pasture for three wethers.

At Dunvegan I had tasted lotus, and was in danger of forgetting that I was ever to depart, till Mr. Boswell sagely reproached me with my sluggishness and softness. I had no very forcible defence to make; and we agreed to pursue our journey. Macleod accompanied us to Ulinish, where we were entertained by the sheriff of the island.

Ulinish.

Mr. Macqueen travelled with us, and directed our attention to all that was worthy of observation. With him we went to see an ancient building, called a *dun* or borough. It was a circular enclosure, about forty-two feet in diameter, walled round with loose stones, perhaps to the height of nine feet. The walls are very thick, diminishing a little towards the top, and though in these coun-

tries stone is not brought far, must have been raised with much labour. Within the great circle were several smaller rounds of wall, which formed distinct apartments. Its date and its use are unknown. Some suppose it the original seat of the chiefs of the Macleods. Mr. Macqueen thought it a Danish fort.

The entrance is covered with flat stones, and is narrow, because it was necessary that the stones which lie over it, should reach from one wall to the other; yet, strait as the passage is, they seem heavier than could have been placed where they now lie, by the naked strength of as many men as might stand about them. They were probably raised by putting long pieces of wood under them, to which the action of a long line of lifters might be applied. Savages, in all countries, have patience proportionate to their unskilfulness, and are content to attain their end by very tedious methods.

If it was ever roofed, it might once have been a dwelling, but as there is no provision for water, it could not have been a fortress. In Skye, as in every other place, there is an ambition of exalting whatever has survived memory, to some important use, and referring it to very remote ages. I am inclined to suspect, that in lawless times, when the inhabitants of every mountain stole the cattle

of their neighbour, these enclosures were used to secure the herds and the flocks in the night. When they were driven within the wall, they might be easily watched, and defended as long as could be needful; for the robbers durst not wait till the injured clan should find them in the morning.

The interior enclosures, if the whole building were once a house, were the chambers of the chief inhabitants. If it was a place of security for cattle, they were probably the shelters of the keepers.

From the Dun we were conducted to another place of security, a cave carried a great way under ground, which had been discovered by digging after a fox. These caves, of which many have been found, and many probably remain concealed, are formed, I believe, commonly by taking advantage of a hollow, where banks or rocks rise on either side. If no such place can be found, the ground must be cut away. The walls are made by piling stones against the earth, on either side. It is then roofed by large stones laid across the cavern, which therefore cannot be wide. Over the roof, turfs were placed, and grass was suffered to grow; and the mouth was concealed by bushes, or some other cover.

These caves were represented to us as the cabins of the first rude inhabitants, of which, however, I am by no means persuaded. This was so low, that

no man could stand upright in it. By their construction they are all so narrow, that two can never pass along them together, and being subterraneous, they must be always damp. They are not the work of an age much ruder than the present; for they are formed with as much art as the construction of a common hut requires. I imagine them to have been places only of occasional use, in which the islander, upon a sudden alarm, hid his utensils, or his clothes, and perhaps sometimes his wife and children.

This cave we entered, but could not proceed the whole length, and went away without knowing how far it was carried. For this omission we shall be blamed, as we perhaps have blamed other travellers; but the day was rainy, and the ground was damp. We had with us neither spades nor pickaxes, and if love of ease surmounted our desire of knowledge, the offence has not the invidiousness of singularity.

Edifices, either standing or ruined, are the chief records of an illiterate nation. In some part of this journey, at no great distance from our way, stood a shattered fortress, of which the learned minister, to whose communication we are much indebted, gave us an account.

Those, said he, are the walls of a place of refuge, built in the time of James the Sixth, by Hugh

Macdonald, who was next heir to the dignity and fortune of his chief. Hugh, being so near his wish, was impatient of delay; and had art and influence sufficient to engage several gentlemen in a plot against the laird's life. Something must be stipulated on both sides; for they would not dip their hands in blood merely for Hugh's advancement. The compact was formally written, signed by the conspirators, and placed in the hands of one Macleod.

It happened that Macleod had sold some cattle to a drover, who, not having ready money, gave him a bond for payment. The debt was discharged, and the bond re-demanded; which Macleod, who could not read, intending to put into his hands, gave him the conspiracy. The drover, when he had read the paper, delivered it privately to Macdonald, who, being thus informed of his danger, called his friends together, and provided for his safety. He made a public feast, and inviting Hugh Macdonald and his confederates, placed each of them at the table between two men of known fidelity. The compact of conspiracy was then shown, and every man confronted with his own name. Macdonald acted with great moderation. He upbraided Hugh both with disloyalty and ingratitude; but told the rest, that he considered them as men deluded and misinformed.

Hugh was sworn to fidelity, and dismissed with his companions; but he was not generous enough to be reclaimed by lenity; and finding no longer any countenance among the gentlemen, endeavoured to execute the same design by meaner hands. In this practice he was detected, taken to Macdonald's castle, and imprisoned in the dungeon. When he was hungry, they let down a plentiful meal of salted meat; and when, after his repast, he called for drink, conveyed to him a covered cup, which, when he lifted the lid, he found empty. From that time they visited him no more, but left him to perish in solitude and darkness.

We were then told of a cavern by the sea-side, remarkable for the powerful reverberation of sounds. After dinner we took a boat, to explore this curious cavity. The boatmen, who seemed to be of a rank above that of the common drudges, inquired who the strangers were, and being told we came one from Scotland, and the other from England, asked if the Englishman could recount a long genealogy. What answer was given them, the conversation being in Erse, I was not much inclined to examine.

They expected no good event of the voyage; for one of them declared that he heard the cry of an English ghost. This omen I was not told till

after our return, and therefore cannot claim the dignity of despising it.

The sea was smooth. We never left the shore, and came without any disaster to the cavern, which we found rugged and misshapen, about one hundred and eighty feet long, thirty wide in the broadest part, and in the loftiest, as we guessed, about thirty high. It was now dry, but at high water the sea rises in it near six feet. Here I saw what I had never seen before, limpets and muscles in their natural state. But, as a new testimony to the veracity of common fame, here was no echo to be heard.

We then walked through a natural arch in the rock, which might have pleased us by its novelty, had the stones, which encumbered our feet, given us leisure to consider it. We were shown the gummy seed of the kelp, that fastens itself to a stone, from which it grows into a strong stalk.

In our return, we found a little boy upon the point of a rock, catching with an angle a supper for the family. We rowed up to him, and borrowed his rod, with which Mr. Boswell caught a cuddy.

The cuddy is a fish of which I know not the philosophical name. It is not much bigger than a gudgeon, but is of great use in these islands, as

it affords the lower people both food and oil for their lamps. Cuddies are so abundant, at some times of the year, that they are caught like white bait in the Thames, only by dipping a basket and drawing it back.

If it were always practicable to fish, these islands could never be in much danger from famine; but unhappily, in the winter, when other provision fails, the seas are commonly too rough for nets, or boats.

Talisker in Skye.

From Ulinish our next stage was to Talisker, the house of colonel Macleod, an officer in the Dutch service, who in this time of universal peace, has for several years been permitted to be absent from his regiment. Having been bred to physic, he is consequently a scholar, and his lady, by accompanying him in his different places of residence, is become skilful in several languages. Talisker is the place beyond all that I have seen, from which the gay and the jovial seem utterly excluded; and where the hermit might expect to grow old in meditation, without possibility of disturbance or interruption. It is situated very near the sea, but upon a coast where no vessel lands but when it is driven by a tempest on the rocks.

Towards the land are lofty hills streaming with waterfalls. The garden is sheltered by firs, or pines, which grow there so prosperously, that some, which the present inhabitant planted, are very high and thick.

At this place we very happily met with Mr. Donald Maclean, a young gentleman, the eldest son of the laird of Col, heir to a very great extent of land, and so desirous of improving his inheritance, that he spent a considerable time among the farmers of Hertfordshire and Hampshire, to learn their practice. He worked with his own hands at the principal operations of agriculture, that he might not deceive himself by a false opinion of skill, which if he should find it deficient at home, he had no means of completing. If the world has agreed to praise the travels and manual labours of the czar of Muscovy, let Col have his share of the like applause, in the proportion of his dominions to the empire of Russia.

This young gentleman was sporting in the mountains of Skye, and when he was weary with following his game, repaired for lodging to Talisker. At night he missed one of his dogs, and when he went to seek him in the morning, found two eagles feeding on his carcase.

Col, for he must be named by his possessions, hearing that our intention was to visit Iona, of-

fered to conduct us to his chief, Sir Allan Maclean, who lived in the isle of Inch Kenneth, and would readily find us a convenient passage. From this time was formed an acquaintance, which being begun by kindness, was accidentally continued by constraint; we derived much pleasure from it, and I hope have given him no reason to repent it.

The weather was now almost one continued storm, and we were to snatch some happy intermission to be conveyed to Mull, the third island of the Hebrides, lying about a degree south of Skye, whence we might easily find our way to Inch Kenneth, where Sir Allan Maclean resided, and afterward to Iona.

For this purpose, the most commodious station that we could take was Armidel, which Sir Alexander Macdonald had now left to a gentleman who lived there as his factor or steward.

In our way to Armidel was Coriatachan, where we had already been, and to which therefore we were very willing to return. We staid however so long at Talisker, that a great part of our journey was performed in the gloom of the evening. In travelling even thus almost without light through naked solitude, when there is a guide whose conduct may be trusted, a mind not naturally too much disposed to fear, may preserve some degree of cheerfulness; but what must be the solicitude

of him who should be wandering, among the crags and hollows, benighted, ignorant, and alone?

The fictions of the Gothic romances were not so remote from credibility as they are now thought. In the full prevalence of the feudal institution, when violence desolated the world, and every baron lived in a fortress, forests and castles were regularly succeeded by each other, and the adventurer might very suddenly pass from the gloom of woods, or the ruggedness of moors, to seats of plenty, gaiety, and magnificence. Whatever is imagined in the wildest tale, if giants, dragons, and enchantment be excepted, would be felt by him, who, wandering in the mountains without a guide, or upon the sea without a pilot, should be carried amidst his terror and uncertainty, to the hospitality and elegance of Raasay or Dunvegan.

To Coriatachan at last we came, and found ourselves welcomed as before. Here we staid two days, and made such inquiries as curiosity suggested. The house was filled with company, among whom Mr. Macpherson and his sister distinguished themselves by their politeness and accomplishments. By him we were invited to Ostig, a house not far from Armidel, where we might easily hear of a boat, when the weather would suffer us to leave the island.

Ostig in Skye.

At Ostig, of which Mr. Macpherson is minister, we were entertained for some days, then removed to Armidel, where we finished our observations on the island of Skye.

As this island lies in the fifty-seventh degree, the air cannot be supposed to have much warmth. The long continuance of the sun above the horizon, does indeed sometimes produce great heat in northern latitudes; but this can only happen in sheltered places, where the atmosphere is to a certain degree stagnant, and the same mass of air continues to receive for many hours the rays of the sun, and the vapours of the earth. Skye lies open on the west and north to a vast extent of ocean, and is cooled in the summer by a perpetual ventilation, but by the same blasts is kept warm in winter. Their weather is not pleasing. Half the year is deluged with rain. From the autumnal to the vernal equinox, a dry day is hardly known, except when the showers are suspended by a tempest. Under such skies can be expected no great exuberance of vegetation. Their winter overtakes their summer, and their harvest lies upon the ground drenched with rain. The au-

tumn struggles hard to produce some of our early fruits. I gathered gooseberries in September; but they were small, and the husk was thick.

The winter is seldom such as puts a full stop to the growth of plants, or reduces the cattle to live wholly on the surplusage of the summer. In the year seventy-one they had a severe season, remembered by the name of the Black Spring, from which the island has not yet recovered. The snow lay long upon the ground, a calamity hardly known before. Part of their cattle died for want, part were unseasonably sold to buy sustenance for the owners; and, what I have not read or heard of before, the kine that survived were so emaciated and dispirited, that they did not require the male at the usual time. Many of the roebucks perished.

The soil, as in other countries, has its diversities. In some parts there is only a thin layer of earth spread upon a rock, which bears nothing but short brown heath, and perhaps is not generally capable of any better product. There are many bogs or mosses of greater or less extent, where the soil cannot be supposed to want depth, though it is too wet for the plough. But we did not observe in these any aquatic plants. The valleys and the mountains are alike darkened with

heath. Some grass, however, grows here and there, and some happier spots of earth are capable of tillage.

Their agriculture is laborious, and perhaps rather feeble than unskilful. Their chief manure is seaweed, which, when they lay it to rot upon the field, gives them a better crop than those of the Highlands. They heap seashells upon the dunghill, which in time moulder into a fertilizing substance. When they find a vein of earth where they cannot use it, they dig it up, and add it to the mould of a more commodious place.

Their corn grounds often lie in such intricacies among the crags, that there is no room for the action of a team and plough. The soil is then turned up by manual labour, with an instrument called a crooked spade, of a form and weight which to me appeared very incommodious, and would perhaps be soon improved in a country where workmen could be easily found and easily paid. It has a narrow blade of iron fixed to a long and heavy piece of wood, which must have, about a foot and a half above the iron, a knee or flexure with the angle downwards. When the farmer encounters a stone, which is the great impediment of his operations, he drives the blade under it, and bringing the knee or angle to the ground, has in the long handle a very forcible lever.

According to the different mode of tillage, farms are distinguished into long land and short land. Long land is that which affords room for a plough, and short land is turned up by the spade.

The grain which they commit to the furrows thus tediously formed, is either oats or barley. They do not sow barley without very copious manure, and then they expect from it ten for one, an increase equal to that of better countries; but the culture is so operose, that they content themselves commonly with oats; and who can relate without compassion, that after all their diligence they are to expect only a triple increase? It is in vain to hope for plenty, when a third part of the harvest must be reserved for seed.

When their grain is arrived at the state which they must consider as ripeness, they do not cut, but pull the barley: to the oats they apply the sickle. Wheel carriages they have none, but make a frame of timber which is drawn by one horse, with the two points behind pressing on the ground. On this they sometimes drag home their sheaves, but often convey them home in a kind of open panier, or frame of sticks, upon the horse's back.

Of that which is obtained with so much difficulty, nothing surely ought to be wasted; yet their method of clearing their oats from the husk

is by parching them in the straw. Thus, with the genuine improvidence of savages, they destroy that fodder for want of which their cattle may perish. From this practice they have two petty conveniences: they dry the grain so that it is easily reduced to meal, and they escape the theft of the thresher. The taste contracted from the fire by the oats, as by every other scorched substance, use must long ago have made grateful. The oats that are not parched must be dried in a kiln.

The barns of Skye I never saw. That which Macleod of Raasay had erected near his house was so contrived, because the harvest is seldom brought home dry, as by perpetual perflation to prevent the mow from heating.

Of their gardens I can judge only from their tables. I did not observe that the common greens were wanting, and suppose, that by choosing an advantageous exposition, they can raise all the more hardy esculent plants. Of vegetable fragrance or beauty they are not yet studious. Few vows are made to Flora in the Hebrides.

They gather a little hay; but the grass is mown late, and is so often almost dry and again very wet, before it is housed, that it becomes a collection of withered stalks without taste or fragrance; it must be eaten by cattle that have nothing else,

but by most English farmers would be thrown away.

In the islands I have not heard that any subterraneous treasures have been discovered, though where there are mountains, there are commonly minerals. One of the rocks in Col has a black vein, imagined to consist of the ore of lead; but it was never yet opened or essayed. In Skye a black mass was accidentally picked up, and brought into the house of the owner of the land, who found himself strongly inclined to think it a coal; but unhappily it did not burn in the chimney. Common ores would be here of no great value; for what requires to be separated by fire, must, if it were found, be carried away in its mineral state, here being no fuel for the smelting-house or forge. Perhaps by diligent search in this world of stone, some valuable species of marble might be discovered. But neither philosophical curiosity, nor commercial industry, have yet fixed their abode here, where the importunity of immediate want, supplied but for the day, and craving on the morrow, has left little room for excursive knowledge, or the pleasing fancies of distant profit.

They have lately found a manufacture considerably lucrative. Their rocks abound with kelp, a seaplant, of which the ashes are melted into glass

They burn kelp in great quantities, and then send it away in ships, which come regularly to purchase them. This new source of riches has raised the rents of many maritime farms; but the tenants pay, like all other tenants, the additional rent with great unwillingness; because they consider the profits of the kelp as the mere product of personal labour, to which the landlord contributes nothing. However, as any man may be said to give what he gives the power of gaining, he has certainly as much right to profit from the price of kelp as of any thing else found or raised upon his ground.

This new trade has excited a long and eager litigation between Macdonald and Macleod, for a ledge of rocks, which, till the value of kelp was known, neither of them desired the reputation of possessing.

The cattle of Skye are not so small as is commonly believed. Since they have sent their beeves in great numbers to southern marts, they have probably taken more care of their breed. At stated times the annual growth of cattle is driven to a fair by a general drover, and with the money, which he returns to the farmer, the rents are paid.

The price regularly expected, is from two to three pounds a head: there was once one sold for five pounds. They go from the islands very lean,

and are not offered to the butcher till they have been long fatted in English pastures.

Of their black cattle some are without horns, called by the Scots humble cows, as we call a bee an humble bee, that wants a sting. Whether this difference be specific, or accidental, though we inquired with great diligence, we could not be informed. We are not very sure that the bull is ever without horns, though we have been told. that such bulls there are. What is produced by putting a horned and unhorned male and female together, no man has ever tried that thought the result worthy of observation.

Their horses are, like their cows, of a moderate size. I had no difficulty to mount myself commodiously by the favour of the gentlemen. I heard of very little cows in Barra, and very little horses in Rum, where perhaps no care is taken to prevent that diminution of size, which must always happen, where the greater and the less copulate promiscuously, and the young animal is restrained from growth by penury of sustenance.

The goat is the general inhabitant of the earth, complying with every difference of climate and of soil. The goats of the Hebrides are like others: nor did I hear any thing of their sheep to be particularly remarked.

In the penury of these malignant regions, no-

thing is left that can be converted to food. The goats and the sheep are milked like the cows. A single meal of a goat is a quart, and of a sheep a pint. Such at least was the account, which I could extract from those of whom I am not sure that they ever had inquired.

The milk of goats is much thinner than that of cows, and that of sheep is much thicker. Sheep's milk is never eaten before it is boiled; as it is thick, it must be very liberal of curd, and the people of St. Kilda form it into small cheeses.

The stags of the mountains are less than those of our parks or forests, perhaps not bigger than our fallow deer. Their flesh has no rankness, nor is inferior in flavour to our common venison. The roebuck I neither saw nor tasted. These are not countries for a regular chase. The deer are not driven with horns and hounds. A sportsman, with his gun in his hand, watches the animal, and when he has wounded him, traces him by the blood.

They have a race of brinded greyhounds larger and stronger than those with which we course hares, and those are the only dogs used by them for the chase.

Man is by the use of firearms made so much an overmatch for other animals, that in all countries, where they are in use, the wild part of the crea-

tion sensibly diminishes. There will probably not be long either stags or roebucks in the islands. All the beasts of chase would have been lost long ago in countries well inhabited, had they not been preserved by laws for the pleasure of the rich.

There are in Skye neither rats nor mice, but the weasel is so frequent, that he is heard in houses rattling behind chests or beds, as rats in England. They probably owe to his predominance that they have no other vermin; for since the great rat took possession of this part of the world, scarce a ship can touch at any port, but some of his race are left behind. They have within these few years, began to infest the isle of Col, where, being left by some trading vessel, they have increased for want of weasels to oppose them.

The inhabitants of Skye, and of the other islands, which I have seen, are commonly of the middle stature, with fewer among them very tall or very short than are seen in England; or perhaps, as their numbers are small, the chances of any deviation from the common measure are necessarily few. The tallest men that I saw are among those of higher rank. In regions of barrenness and scarcity, the human race is hindered in its growth by the same causes as other animals.

The ladies have as much beauty here as in other places, but bloom and softness are not to

be expected among the lower classes, whose faces are exposed to the rudeness of the climate, and whose features are sometimes contracted by want, and sometimes hardened by the blasts. Supreme beauty is seldom found in cottages or workshops, even where no real hardships are suffered. To expand the human face to its full perfection, it seems necessary that the mind should co-operate by placidness of content, or consciousness of superiority.

Their strength is proportionate to their size, but they are accustomed to run upon rough ground, and therefore can with great agility skip over the bog, or clamber the mountain. For a campaign in the wastes of America, soldiers better qualified could not have been found. Having little work to do, they are not willing, nor perhaps able, to endure a long continuance of manual labour, and are therefore considered as habitually idle.

Having never been supplied with those accommodations, which life extensively diversified with trades affords, they supply their wants by very insufficient shifts, and endure many inconveniences, which a little attention would easily relieve. I have seen a horse carrying home the harvest on a crate. Under his tail was a stick for a crupper, held at the two ends by twists of straw. Hemp will grow in their islands, and therefore

ropes may be had. If they wanted hemp, they might make better cordage of rushes, or perhaps of nettles, than of straw.

Their method of life neither secures them perpetual health, nor exposes them to any particular diseases. There are physicians in the islands, who, I believe, all practise chirurgery, and all compound their own medicines.

It is generally supposed, that life is longer in places where there are few opportunities of luxury; but I found no instance here of extraordinary longevity. A cottager grows old over his oaten cakes, like a citizen at a turtle feast. He is indeed seldom incommoded by corpulence. Poverty preserves him from sinking under the burden of himself, but he escapes no other injury of time. Instances of long life are often related, which those who hear them are more willing to credit than examine. To be told that any man has attained a hundred years, gives hope and comfort to him who stands trembling on the brink of his own climacteric.

Length of life is distributed impartially to very different modes of life in very different climates; and the mountains have no greater examples of age and health than the lowlands, where I was introduced to two ladies of high quality; one of whom, in her ninety-fourth year, presided at her

table with the full exercise of all her powers; and the other has attained her eighty-fourth, without any diminution of her vivacity, and with little reason to accuse time of depredations on her beauty.

In the islands, as in most other places, the inhabitants are of different rank, and one does not encroach here upon another. Where there is no commerce nor manufacture, he that is born poor can scarcely become rich; and if none are able to buy estates, he that is born to land cannot annihilate his family by selling it. This was once the state of these countries. Perhaps there is no example, till within a century and half, of any family whose estate was alienated otherwise than by violence or forfeiture. Since money has been brought amongst them, they have found, like others, the art of spending more than they receive; and I saw with grief the chief of a very ancient clan, whose island was condemned by law to be sold for the satisfaction of his creditors.

The name of highest in dignity is laird, of which there are in the extensive isle of Skye only three, Macdonald, Macleod, and Mackinnon. The laird is the original owner of the land, whose natural power must be very great where no man lives but by agriculture; and where the produce of the land is not conveyed through the labyrinths of traffic, but passes directly from the hand that gathers it

to the mouth that eats it. The laird has all those in his power that live upon his farms. Kings can, for the most part, only exalt or degrade. The laird at pleasure can feed or starve, can give bread or withhold it. This inherent power was yet strengthened by the kindness of consanguinity, and the reverence of patriarchal authority. The laird was the father of the clan, and his tenants commonly bore his name. And to these principles of original command was added, for many ages, an exclusive right of legal jurisdiction.

This multifarious and extensive obligation operated with force scarcely credible. Every duty, moral or political, was absorbed in affection and adherence to the chief. Not many years have passed since the clans knew no law but the laird's will. He told them to whom they should be friends or enemies, what king they should obey, and what religion they should profess.

When the Scots first rose in arms against the succession of the house of Hanover, Lovat, the chief of the Frasers, was in exile for a rape. The Frasers were very numerous, and very zealous against the government. A pardon was sent to Lovat. He came to the English camp, and the clan immediately deserted to him.

Next in dignity to the laird is the tacksman, a

large taker or lease-holder of land, of which he keeps part as a domain in his own hand, and lets part to under-tenants. The tacksman is necessarily a man capable of securing to the laird the whole rent, and is commonly a collateral relation. These tacks, or subordinate possessions, were long considered as hereditary, and the occupant was distinguished by the name of the place at which he resided. He held a middle station, by which the highest and the lowest orders were connected. He paid rent and reverence to the laird, and received them from the tenants. This tenure still subsists, with its original operation, but not with the primitive stability. Since the islanders, no longer content to live, have learned the desire of growing rich, an ancient dependant is in danger of giving way to a higher bidder, at the expense of domestic dignity and hereditary power. The stranger, whose money buys him preference, considers himself as paying for all that he has, and is indifferent about the laird's honour or safety. The commodiousness of money is indeed great; but there are some advantages which money cannot buy, and which therefore no wise man will by the love of money be tempted to forego.

I have found in the hither parts of Scotland, men not defective in judgment or general experience, who consider the tacksman as a useless

burden of the ground, as a drone, who lives upon the product of an estate, without the right of property, or the merit of labour, and who impoverishes at once the landlord and the tenant. The land, say they, is let to the tacksman at sixpence an acre, and by him to the tenant at tenpence. Let the owner be the immediate landlord to all the tenants; if he sets the ground at eightpence, he will increase his revenue by a fourth part, and the tenant's burden will be diminished by a fifth.

Those who pursue this train of reasoning, seem not sufficiently to inquire whither it will lead them, nor to know that it will equally show the propriety of suppressing all wholesale trade, of shutting up the shops of every man who sells what he does not make, and of extruding all whose agency and profit intervene between the manufacturer and the consumer. They may, by stretching their understandings a little wider, comprehend, that all those who, by undertaking large quantities of manufacture, and affording employment to many labourers, make themselves considered as benefactors to the public, have only been robbing their workmen with one hand, and their customers with the other. If Crowley had sold only what he could make, and all his smiths had wrought their own iron with their own hammers, he would have lived on less, and they would have sold their work

for more. The salaries of superintendents and clerks would have been partly saved, and partly shared, and nails been sometimes cheaper by a farthing in a hundred. But then, if the smith could not have found an immediate purchaser, he must have deserted his anvil; if there had by accident at any time been more sellers than buyers, the workmen must have reduced their profit to nothing, by underselling one another; and as no great stock could have been in any hand, no sudden demand of large quantities could have been answered, and the builder must have stood still till the nailer could supply him.

According to these schemes, universal plenty is to begin and end in universal misery. Hope and emulation will be utterly extinguished; and as all must obey the call of immediate necessity, nothing that requires extensive views, or provides for distant consequences, will ever be performed.

To the southern inhabitants of Scotland, the state of the mountains and the islands is equally unknown with that of Borneo or Sumatra: of both they have only heard a little, and guess the rest. They are strangers to the language and the manners, to the advantages and wants of the people, whose life they would model, and whose evils they would remedy.

Nothing is less difficult than to procure one

convenience by the forfeiture of another. A soldier may expedite his march by throwing away his arms. To banish the tacksman is easy, to make a country plentiful by diminishing the people, is an expeditious mode of husbandry; but that abundance, which there is nobody to enjoy, contributes little to human happiness.

As the mind must govern the hands, so in every society the man of intelligence must direct the man of labour. If the tacksmen be taken away, the Hebrides must in their present state be given up to grossness and ignorance; the tenant, for want of instruction, will be unskilful, and for want of admonition, will be negligent. The laird, in these wide estates, which often consist of islands remote from one another, cannot extend his personal influence to all his tenants; and the steward having no dignity annexed to his character, can have little authority among men taught to pay reverence only to birth, and who regard the tacksman as their hereditary superior; nor can the steward have equal zeal for the prosperity of an estate profitable only to the laird, with the tacksman, who has the laird's income involved in his own.

The only gentlemen in the islands are the lairds, the tacksmen, and the ministers, who frequently improve their livings by becoming farmers. If the

tacksmen be banished, who will be left to impart knowledge, or impress civility? The laird must always be at a distance from the greater part of his lands; and if he resides at all upon them, must drag his days in solitude, having no longer either a friend or a companion; he will therefore depart to some more comfortable residence, and leave the tenants to the wisdom and mercy of a factor.

Of tenants there are different orders, as they have greater or less stock. Land is sometimes leased to a small fellowship, who live in a cluster of huts, called a Tenant's Town, and are bound jointly and separately for the payment of their rent. These, I believe, employ in the care of their cattle and the labour of tillage, a kind of tenants yet lower; who having a hut, with grass for a certain number of cows and sheep, pay their rent by a stipulated quantity of labour.

The condition of domestic servants, or the price of occasional labour, I do not know with certainty. I was told that the maids have sheep, and are allowed to spin for their own clothing; perhaps they have no pecuniary wages, or none but in very wealthy families. The state of life, which has hitherto been purely pastoral, begins now to be a little variegated with commerce; but novelties enter by degrees, and till one mode has fully

prevailed over the other, no settled notion can be formed.

Such is the system of insular subordination, which having little variety, cannot afford much delight in the view, nor long detain the mind in contemplation. The inhabitants were for a long time, perhaps, not unhappy; but their content was a muddy mixture of pride and ignorance, an indifference for pleasures which they did not know, a blind veneration for their chiefs, and a strong conviction of their own importance.

Their pride has been crushed by the heavy hand of a vindictive conqueror, whose severities have been followed by laws, which, though they cannot be called cruel, have produced much discontent, because they operate upon the surface of life, and make every eye bear witness to subjection. To be compelled to a new dress has always been found painful.

Their chiefs being now deprived of their jurisdiction, have already lost much of their influence; and as they gradually degenerate from patriarchal rulers to rapacious landlords, they will divest themselves of the little that remains.

That dignity which they derived from an opinion of their military importance, the law, which disarmed them, has abated. An old gentleman,

delighting himself with the recollection of better days, related, that forty years ago, a chieftain walked out attended by ten or twelve followers, with their arms rattling. That animating rabble has now ceased. The chief has lost his formidable retinue; and the Highlander walks his heath unarmed and defenceless, with the peaceable submission of a French peasant, or English cottager.

Their ignorance grows every day less, but their knowledge is yet of little other use than to show them their wants. They are now in the period of education, and feel the uneasiness of discipline, without yet perceiving the benefit of instruction.

The last law, by which the Highlanders are deprived of their arms, has operated with efficacy beyond expectation. Of former statutes made with the same design, the execution had been feeble, and the effect inconsiderable. Concealment was undoubtedly practised, and perhaps often with connivance. There was tenderness or partiality on one side, and obstinacy on the other. But the law, which followed the victory of Culloden, found the whole nation dejected and intimidated; informations were given without danger and without fear, and the arms were collected with such rigour, that every house was despoiled of its defence.

To disarm part of the Highlands, could give

no reasonable occasion of complaint. Every government must be allowed the power of taking away the weapon that is lifted against it. But the loyal clans murmured, with some appearance of justice, that, after having defended the king, they were forbidden for the future to defend themselves; and that the sword should be forfeited, which had been legally employed. Their case is undoubtedly hard, but in political regulations, good cannot be complete, it can only be predominant.

Whether by disarming a people thus broken into several tribes, and thus remote from the seat of power, more good than evil has been produced, may deserve inquiry. The supreme power in every community has the right of debarring every individual, and every subordinate society, from self-defence, only because the supreme power is able to defend them; and therefore where the governor cannot act, he must trust the subject to act for himself. These islands might be wasted with fire and sword before their sovereign would know their distress. A gang of robbers, such as has been lately found confederating themselves in the Highlands, might lay a wide region under contribution. The crew of a petty privateer might land on the largest and most wealthy of the islands, and riot without control in cruelty

and waste. It was observed by one of the chiefs of Skye, that fifty armed men might, without resistance, ravage the country. Laws that place the subjects in such a state, contravene the first principles of the compact of authority: they exact obedience, and yield no protection.

It affords a generous and manly pleasure to conceive a little nation gathering its fruits and tending its herds with fearless confidence, though it lies open on every side to invasion, where, in contempt of walls and trenches, every man sleeps securely with his sword beside him; where all on the first approach of hostility came together at the call of battle, as at a summons to a festal show; and committing their cattle to the care of those whom age or nature has disabled, engage the enemy with that competition for hazard and for glory, which operate in men that fight under the eye of those whose dislike or kindness they have always considered as the greatest evil or the greatest good.

This was, in the beginning of the present century, the state of the Highlands. Every man was a soldier, who partook of national confidence, and interested himself in national honour. To lose this spirit, is to lose what no small advantage will compensate.

It may likewise deserve to be inquired, whether a great nation ought to be totally commercial?

whether amidst the uncertainty of human affairs, too much attention to one mode of happiness may not endanger others? whether the pride of riches must not sometimes have recourse to the protection of courage? and whether, if it be necessary to preserve in some part of the empire the military spirit, it can subsist more commodiously in any place than in remote and unprofitable provinces, where it can commonly do little harm, and whence it may be called forth at any sudden exigence?

It must however be confessed, that a man who places honour only in successful violence, is a very troublesome and pernicious animal in time of peace; and that the martial character cannot prevail in a whole people, but by the diminution of all other virtues. He that is accustomed to resolve all right into conquest, will have very little tenderness of equity. All the friendship in such a life can be only a confederacy of invasion, or alliance of defence. The strong must flourish by force, and the weak subsist by stratagem.

Till the Highlanders lost their ferocity with their arms, they suffered from each other all that malignity could dictate, or precipitance could act. Every provocation was revenged with blood, and no man that ventured into a numerous company, by whatever occasion brought together, was sure of returning without a wound. If they are now

exposed to foreign hostilities, they may talk of the danger, but can seldom feel it. If they are no longer martial, they are no longer quarrelsome. Misery is caused, for the most part, not by a heavy crush of disaster, but by the corrosion of less visible evils, which canker enjoyment, and undermine security. The visit of an invader is necessarily rare, but domestic animosities allow no cessation.

The abolition of the local jurisdictions, which had for so many ages been exercised by the chiefs, has likewise its evil and its good. The feudal constitution naturally diffused itself into long ramifications of subordinate authority. To this general temper of the government was added the peculiar form of the country, broken by mountains into many subdivisions scarcely accessible but to the natives, and guarded by passes, or perplexed with intricacies, through which national justice could not find its way.

The power of deciding controversies, and of punishing offences, as some such power there must always be, was entrusted to the lairds of the country, to those whom the people considered as their natural judges. It cannot be supposed that a rugged proprietor of the rocks, unprincipled and unenlightened, was a nice resolver of entangled claims, or very exact in proportioning punishment

to offences. But the more he indulged his own will, the more he held his vassals in dependence. Prudence and innocence, without the favour of the chief, conferred no security; and crimes involved no danger, when the judge was resolute to acquit.

When the chiefs were men of knowledge and virtue, the convenience of a domestic judicature was great. No long journeys were necessary, nor artificial delays could be practised; the character, the alliances, and interests of the litigants, were known to the court, and all false pretences were easily detected. The sentence, when it was past, could not be evaded; the power of the laird superseded formalities, and justice could not be defeated by interest or stratagem.

I doubt not but that since the regular judges have made their circuits through the whole country, right has been every where more wisely and more equally distributed; the complaint is, that litigation is grown troublesome, and that the magistrates are too few, and therefore often too remote for general convenience.

Many of the smaller islands have no legal officer within them. I once asked, if a crime should be committed, by what authority the offender could be seized? and was told, that the laird would exert his right; a right which he must now usurp, but which surely necessity must vindicate, and

which is therefore yet exercised in lower degrees, by some of the proprietors, when legal processes cannot be obtained.

In all greater questions, however, there is now happily an end to all fear or hope from malice or from favour. The roads are secure in those places through which, forty years ago, no traveller could pass without a convoy. All trials of right by the sword are forgotten, and the mean are in as little danger from the powerful as in other places. No scheme of policy has, in any country, yet brought the rich and poor on equal terms into courts of judicature. Perhaps experience, improving on experience, may in time effect it.

Those who have long enjoyed dignity and power, ought not to lose it without some equivalent. There was paid to the chiefs by the public, in exchange for their privileges, perhaps a sum greater than most of them had ever possessed, which excited a thirst for riches, of which it showed them the use. When the power of birth and station ceases, no hope remains but from the prevalence of money. Power and wealth supply the place of each other. Power confers the ability of gratifying our desire without the consent of others. Wealth enables us to obtain the consent of others to our gratification. Power, simply considered, whatever it confers on one, must take

from another. Wealth enables its owner to give to others, by taking only from himself. Power pleases the violent and proud: wealth delights the placid and the timorous. Youth therefore flies at power, and age grovels after riches.

The chiefs, divested of their prerogatives, necessarily turned their thoughts to the improvement of their revenues, and expect more rent, as they have less homage. The tenant, who is far from perceiving that his condition is made better in the same proportion as that of his landlord is made worse, does not immediately see why his industry is to be taxed more heavily than before. He refuses to pay the demand, and is ejected; the ground is then let to a stranger, who perhaps brings a larger stock, but who, taking the land at its full price, treats with the laird upon equal terms, and considers him not as a chief but as a trafficker in land. Thus the estate perhaps is improved, but the clan is broken.

It seems to be the general opinion, that the rents have been raised with too much eagerness. Some regard must be paid to prejudice. Those who have hitherto paid but little, will not suddenly be persuaded to pay much, though they can afford it. As ground is gradually improved, and the value of money decreases, the rent may be raised without any diminution of the farmer's

profits; yet it is necessary in these countries, where the ejection of a tenant is a greater evil than in more populous places, to consider not merely what the land will produce, but with what ability the inhabitant can cultivate it. A certain stock can allow but a certain payment; for if the land be doubled, and the stock remains the same, the tenant becomes no richer. The proprietors of the Highlands might perhaps often increase their income, by subdividing the farms, and allotting to every occupier only so many acres as he can profitably employ, but that they want people.

There seems now, whatever be the cause, to be through a great part of the Highlands a general discontent. That adherence which was lately professed by every man to the chief of his name, has now little prevalence; and he that cannot live as he desires at home, listens to the tale of fortunate islands, and happy regions, where every man may have land of his own, and eat the product of his labour without a superior.

Those who have obtained grants of American lands, have, as is well known, invited settlers from all quarters of the globe; and among other places, where oppression might produce a wish for new habitations, their emissaries would not fail to try their persuasions in the isles of Scotland, where at the time when the clans were newly disunited

from their chiefs, and exasperated by unprecedented exactions, it is no wonder that they prevailed.

Whether the mischiefs of emigration were immediately perceived, may be justly questioned. They who went first, were probably such as could best be spared; but the accounts sent by the earliest adventurers, whether true or false, inclined many to follow them; and whole neighbourhoods formed parties for removal; so that departure from their native country is no longer exile. He that goes thus accompanied, carries with him all that makes life pleasant. He sits down in a better climate, surrounded by his kindred and his friends: they carry with them their language, their opinions, their popular songs and hereditary merriment: they change nothing but the place of their abode; and of that change they perceive the benefit.

This is the real effect of emigration, if those that go away together settle on the same spot, and preserve their ancient union. But some relate that these adventurous visitants of unknown regions, after a voyage passed in dreams of plenty and felicity, are dispersed at last upon a sylvan wilderness, where their first years must be spent in toil to clear the ground which is afterwards to be tilled, and that the whole effect of their undertaking is only more fatigue and equal scarcity.

Both accounts may be suspected. Those who are gone will endeavour by every art to draw others after them; for as their numbers are greater, they will provide better for themselves. When Nova Scotia was first peopled, I remember a letter, published under the character of a New Planter, who related how much the climate put him in mind of Italy. Such intelligence the Hebridians probably receive from their transmarine correspondents. But with equal temptations of interest, and perhaps with no greater niceness of veracity, the owners of the islands spread stories of American hardships to keep their people content at home.

Some method to stop this epidemic desire of wandering, which spreads its contagion from valley to valley, deserves to be sought with great diligence. In more fruitful countries, the removal of one, only makes room for the succession of another: but in the Hebrides, the loss of an inhabitant leaves a lasting vacuity; for nobody born in any other parts of the world will choose this country for his residence; and an island once depopulated will remain a desert, as long as the present facility of travel gives every one, who is discontented and unsettled, the choice of his abode.

Let it be inquired, whether the first intention of those who are fluttering on the wing, and collecting a flock that they may take their flight,

be to attain good, or to avoid evil? If they are dissatisfied with that part of the globe which their birth has allotted them, and resolve not to live without the pleasures of happier climates; if they long for bright suns, and calm skies, and flowery fields, and fragrant gardens, I know not by what eloquence they can be persuaded, or by what offers they can be hired to stay.

But if they are driven from their native country by positive evils, and disgusted by ill treatment, real or imaginary, it were fit to remove their grievances, and quiet their resentment; since, if they have been hitherto undutiful subjects, they will not much mend their principles by American conversation.

To allure them into the army, it was thought proper to indulge them in the continuance of their national dress. If this concession could have any effect, it might easily be made. That dissimilitude of appearance, which was supposed to keep them distinct from the rest of the nation, might disincline them from coalescing with the Pennsylvanians or people of Connecticut. If the restitution of their arms will reconcile them to their country, let them have again those weapons, which will not be more mischievous at home than in the Colonies. That they may not fly from the increase of rent, I know not whether the general good does not

require that the landlords be, for a time, restrained in their demands, and kept quiet by pensions proportionate to their loss.

To hinder insurrection by driving away the people, and to govern peaceably, by having no subjects, is an expedient that argues no great profundity of politics. To soften the obdurate, to convince the mistaken, to mollify the resentful, are worthy of a statesman; but it affords a legislator little self-applause to consider, that where there was formerly an insurrection, there is now a wilderness.

It has been a question often agitated, without solution, why those northern regions are now so thinly peopled, which formerly overwhelmed with their armies the Roman empire? The question supposes what I believe is not true, that they had once more inhabitants than they could maintain, and overflowed only because they were full.

This is to estimate the manners of all countries and ages by our own. Migration, while the state of life was unsettled, and there was little communication of intelligence between distant places, was among the wilder nations of Europe capricious and casual. An adventurous projector heard of a fertile coast unoccupied, and led out a colony; a chief of renown for bravery, called the young men together, and led them out to try what fortune

would present. When Cæsar was in Gaul, he found the Helvetians preparing to go they knew not whither, and put a stop to their motions. They settled again in their own country, where they were so far from wanting room, that they had accumulated three years provision for their march.

The religion of the north was military; if they could not find enemies, it was their duty to make them: they travelled in quest of danger, and willingly took the chance of empire or death. If their troops were numerous, the countries from which they were collected are of vast extent, and without much exuberance of people great armies may be raised where every man is a soldier. But their true numbers were never known. Those who were conquered by them are their historians, and shame may have excited them to say, that they were overwhelmed with multitudes. To count is a modern practice, the ancient method was to guess; and when numbers are guessed, they are always magnified.

Thus England has for several years been filled with the achievements of seventy thousand Highlanders employed in America. I have heard from an English officer, not much inclined to favour them, that their behaviour deserved a very high degree of military praise; but their number has

been much exaggerated. One of the ministers told me, that seventy thousand men could not have been found in all the Highlands, and that more than twelve thousand never took the field. Those that went to the American war, went to destruction. Of the old Highland regiment, consisting of twelve hundred, only seventy-six survived to see their country again.

The Gothic swarms have at least been multiplied with equal liberality. That they bore no great proportion to the inhabitants in whose countries they settled, is plain from the paucity of northern words now found in the provincial languages. Their country was not deserted for want of room, because it was covered with forests of vast extent; and the first effect of plenitude of inhabitants is the destruction of wood. As the Europeans spread over America, the lands are gradually laid naked.

I would not be understood to say, that necessity had never any part in their expeditions. A nation, whose agriculture is scanty or unskilful, may be driven out by famine. A nation of hunters may have exhausted their game. I only affirm, that the northern regions were not, when their irruptions subdued the Romans, overpeopled with regard to their real extent of territory, and power of fertility. In a country fully inhabited, however afterward laid waste, evident marks will remain

of its former populousness. But of Scandinavia and Germany, nothing is known but that as we trace their state upwards into antiquity, their woods were greater, and their cultivated ground was less.

That causes very different from want of room may produce a general disposition to seek another country, is apparent from the present conduct of the Highlanders, who are in some places ready to threaten a total secession. The numbers which have already gone, though like other numbers they may be magnified, are very great, and such as if they had gone together, and agreed upon any certain settlement, might have founded an independent government in the depths of the western continent. Nor are they only the lowest and most indigent; many men of considerable wealth have taken with them their train of labourers and dependants; and if they continue the feudal scheme of polity, may establish new clans in the other hemisphere.

That the immediate motives of their desertion must be imputed to their landlords, may be reasonably concluded, because some lairds of more prudence and less rapacity have kept their vassals undiminished. From Raasay only one man had been seduced, and at Col there was no wish to go away.

The traveller who comes hither from more opulent countries, to speculate upon the remains of pastoral life, will not much wonder that a common Highlander has no strong adherence to his native soil; for of animal enjoyments, or of physical good, he leaves nothing that he may not find again wheresoever he may be thrown.

The habitations of men in the Hebrides may be distinguished into huts and houses. By a house, I mean a building with one story over another; by a hut, a dwelling with only one floor. The laird, who formerly lived in a castle, now lives in a house; sometimes sufficiently neat, but seldom very spacious or splendid.* The tacksmen and the ministers have commonly houses. Wherever there is a house, the stranger finds a welcome, and to the other evils of exterminating tacksmen may be added the unavoidable cessation of hospitality, or the devolution of too heavy a burden on the ministers.

Of the houses little can be said. They are small, and by the necessity of accumulating stores, where there are so few opportunities of purchase, the rooms are very heterogeneously filled. With want of cleanliness it were ingratitude to reproach them. The servants having been bred upon the naked earth, think every floor clean, and the quick succession of guests, perhaps not always over-ele-

gant, does not allow much time for adjusting their apartments.

Huts are of many gradations; from murky dens to commodious dwellings.

The wall of a common hut is always built without mortar, by a skilful adaptation of loose stones. Sometimes perhaps a double wall of stones is raised, and the intermediate space filled with earth. The air is thus completely excluded. Some walls are, I think, formed of turfs, held together by a wattle, or texture of twigs. Of the meanest huts the first room is lighted by the entrance, and the second by the smokehole. The fire is usually made in the middle. But there are huts, or dwellings of only one story, inhabited by gentlemen, which have walls cemented with mortar, glass windows, and boarded floors. Of these all have chimneys, and some chimneys have grates.

The house and the furniture are not always nicely suited. We were driven once, by missing a passage, to the hut of a gentleman, where, after a very liberal supper, when I was conducted to my chamber, I found an elegant bed of Indian cotton, spread with fine sheets. The accommodation was flattering; I undressed myself, and felt my feet in the mire. The bed stood upon the bare earth, which a long course of rain had softened to a puddle.

In pastoral countries the condition of the lowest rank of people is sufficiently wretched. Among manufacturers, men that have no property may have art and industry, which make them necessary, and therefore valuable. But where flocks and corn are the only wealth, there are always more hands than work, and of that work there is little in which skill and dexterity can be much distinguished. He therefore who is born poor never can be rich. The son merely occupies the place of the father, and life knows nothing of progression or advancement.

The petty tenants, and labouring peasants, live in miserable cabins, which afford them little more than shelter from the storms. The boor of Norway is said to make all his own utensils. In the Hebrides, whatever might be their ingenuity, the want of wood leaves them no materials. They are probably content with such accommodations as stones of different forms and sizes can afford them.

Their food is not better than their lodging. They seldom taste the flesh of land animals; for here are no markets. What each man eats is from his own stock. The great effect of money is to break property into small parts. In towns, he that has a shilling may have a piece of meat;

but where there is no commerce, no man can eat mutton but by killing a sheep.

Fish in fair weather they need not want; but. I believe, man never lives long on fish, but by constraint; he will rather feed upon roots and berries.

The only fuel of the islands is peat. Their wood is all consumed, and coal they have not yet found. Peat is dug out of the marshes, from the depth of one foot to that of six. That is accounted the best which is nearest the surface. It appears to be a mass of black earth held together by vegetable fibres. I know not whether the earth be bituminous, or whether the fibres be not the only combustible part; which, by heating the interposed earth red hot, make a burning mass. The heat is not very strong nor lasting. The ashes are yellowish, and in a large quantity. When they dig peat, they cut it into square pieces, and pile it up to dry beside the house. In some places it has an offensive smell. It is like wood charked for the smith. The common method of making peat fires is by heaping it on the hearth; but it burns well in grates, and in the best houses is so used.

The common opinion is, that peat grows again where it has been cut; which, as it seems to be

chiefly a vegetable substance, is not unlikely to be true, whether known or not to those who relate it.

There are watermills in Skye and Raasay; but where they are too far distant, the housewives grind their oats with a quern, or handmill, which consists of two stones, about a foot and a half in diameter; the lower is a little convex, to which the concavity of the upper must be fitted. In the middle of the upper stone is a round hole, and on one side is a long handle. The grinder sheds the corn gradually into the hole with one hand, and works the handle round with the other. The corn slides down the convexity of the lower stone, and by the motion of the upper is ground in its passage. These stones are found in Lochaber.

The islands afford few pleasures, except to the hardy sportsman, who can tread the moor and climb the mountain. The distance of one family from another, in a country where travelling has so much difficulty, makes frequent intercourse impracticable. Visits last several days, and are commonly paid by water; yet I never saw a boat furnished with benches, or made commodious by any addition to the first fabric. Conveniences are not missed where they never were enjoyed.

The solace which the bagpipe can give, they have long enjoyed; but among other changes,

which the last revolution introduced, the use of the bagpipe begins to be forgotten. Some of the chief families still entertain a piper, whose office was anciently hereditary. Macrimmon was piper to Macleod, and Rankin to Maclean of Col.

The tunes of the bagpipe are traditional. There has been in Skye. beyond all time of memory, a college of pipers under the direction of Macrimmon, which is not quite extinct. There was another in Mull, superintended by Rankin, which expired about sixteen years ago. To these colleges, while the pipe retained its honour, the students of music repaired for education. I have had my dinner exhilarated by the bagpipe, at Armidel, at Dunvegan, and in Col.

The general conversation of the islanders has nothing particular. I did not meet with the inquisitiveness of which I have read, and suspect the judgment to have been rashly made. A stranger of curiosity comes into a place where a stranger is seldom seen: he importunes the people with questions, of which they cannot guess the motive, and gazes with surprise on things which they, having had them always before their eyes, do not suspect of any thing wonderful. He appears to them like some being of another world, and then thinks it peculiar that they take their turn to inquire whence he comes, and whither he is going.

The islands were long unfurnished with instruction for youth, and none but the sons of gentlemen could have any literature. There are now parochial schools, to which the lord of every manor pays a certain stipend. Here the children are taught to read; but by the rule of their institution they teach only English, so that the natives read a language which they may never use or understand. If a parish, which often happens, contains several islands, the school being but in one, cannot assist the rest. This is the state of Col, which, however, is more enlightened than some other places; for the deficiency is supplied by a young gentleman, who, for his own improvement, travels every year on foot over the Highlands to the session at Aberdeen; and at his return, during the vacation, teaches to read and write in his native island.

In Skye there are two grammar schools, where boarders are taken to be regularly educated. The price of board is from three pounds, to four pounds ten shillings a year, and that of instruction is half-a-crown a quarter. But the scholars are birds of passage, who live at school only in the summer: for in winter provisions cannot be made for any considerable number in one place. This periodical dispersion impresses strongly the scarcity of these countries.

Having heard of no boarding school for ladies nearer than Inverness, I suppose their education is generally domestic. The elder daughters of the higher families are sent into the world, and may contribute by their acquisitions to the improvement of the rest.

Women must here study to be either pleasing or useful. Their deficiencies are seldom supplied by very liberal fortunes. A hundred pounds is a portion beyond the hope of any but the laird's daughter. They do not indeed often give money with their daughters; the question is, How many cows a young lady will bring her husband? A rich maiden has from ten to forty; but two cows are a decent fortune for one who pretends to no distinction.

The religion of the islands is that of the kirk of Scotland. The gentlemen with whom I conversed are all inclined to the English liturgy; but they are obliged to maintain the established minister, and the country is too poor to afford payment to another, who must live wholly on the contribution of his audience.

They therefore all attend the worship of the kirk, as often as a visit from their minister, or the practicability of travelling, gives them opportunity; nor have they any reason to complain of insufficient pastors; for I saw not one in the islands.

whom I had reason to think either deficient in learning, or irregular in life; but found several with whom I could not converse without wishing, as my respect increased, that they had not been presbyterians.

The ancient rigour of puritanism is now very much relaxed, though all are not yet equally enlightened. I sometimes met with prejudices sufficiently malignant, but they were prejudices of ignorance. The ministers in the islands had attained such knowledge as may justly be admired in men, who have no motive to study but generous curiosity, or what is still better, desire of usefulness; with such politeness as so narrow a circle of converse could not have supplied, but to minds naturally disposed to elegance.

Reason and truth will prevail at last. The most learned of the Scottish doctors would now gladly admit a form of prayer, if the people would endure it. The zeal or rage of congregations has its different degrees. In some parishes the Lord's Prayer is suffered: in others it is still rejected as a form, and he that should make it part of his supplication, would be suspected of heretical pravity.

The principle upon which extemporary prayer was originally introduced, is no longer admitted. The minister formerly, in the effusion of his prayer, expected immediate, and perhaps perceptible in-

spiration, and therefore thought it his duty not to think before what he should say. It is now universally confessed, that men pray as they speak on other occasions, according to the general measure of their abilities and attainments. Whatever each may think of a form prescribed by another, he cannot but believe that he can himself compose by study and meditation a better prayer than will rise in his mind at a sudden call; and if he has any hope of supernatural help, why may he not as well receive it when he writes as when he speaks?

In the variety of mental powers, some must perform extemporary prayer with much imperfection; and in the eagerness and rashness of contradictory opinions, if public liturgy be left to the private judgment of every minister, the congregation may often be offended or misled.

There is in Scotland, as among ourselves, a restless suspicion of popish machinations, and a clamour of numerous converts to the Romish religion. The report is, I believe, in both parts of the island equally false. The Romish religion is professed only in Egg and Canna, two small islands, into which the Reformation never made its way. If any missionaries are busy in the Highlands, their zeal entitles them to respect, even from those who cannot think favourably of their doctrine.

The political tenets of the islanders I was not curious to investigate, and they were not eager to obtrude. Their conversation is decent and inoffensive. They disdain to drink for their principles, and there is no disaffection at their tables. I never heard a health offered by a Highlander that might not have circulated with propriety within the precincts of the king's palace.

Legal government has yet something of novelty to which they cannot perfectly conform. The ancient spirit that appealed only to the sword, is yet among them. The tenant of Scalpa, an island belonging to Macdonald, took no care to bring his rent; when the landlord talked of exacting payment, he declared his resolution to keep his ground and drive all intruders from the island, and continued to feed his cattle as on his own land, till it became necessary for the sheriff to dislodge him by violence.

The various kinds of superstition which prevailed here, as in all other regions of ignorance, are by the diligence of the ministers almost extirpated.

Of Brownie, mentioned by Martin, nothing has been heard for many years. Brownie was a sturdy fairy; who, if he was fed, and kindly treated, would, as they said, do a great deal of work.

They now pay him no wages, and are content to labour for themselves.

In Troda, within these three-and-thirty years, milk was put every Saturday for Greogach, or The Old Man with the Long Beard. Whether Greogach was courted as kind, or dreaded as terrible, whether they meant, by giving him the milk, to obtain good or avert evil, I was not informed. The minister is now living by whom the practice was abolished.

They have still among them a great number of charms for the cure of different diseases; they are all invocations, perhaps transmitted to them from the times of popery, which increasing knowledge will bring into disuse.

They have opinions, which cannot be ranked with superstition, because they regard only natural effects. They expect better crops of grain, by sowing their seed in the moon's increase. The moon has great influence in vulgar philosophy. In my memory it was a precept annually given in one of the English almanacks, 'To kill hogs when the moon was increasing, and the bacon would prove the better in boiling.'

We should have had little claim to the praise of curiosity, if we had not endeavoured with particular attention to examine the question of the

Second Sight. Of an opinion received for centuries by a whole nation, and supposed to be confirmed through its whole descent by a series of successive facts, it is desirable that the truth should be established, or the fallacy detected.

The Second Sight is an impression made either by the mind upon the eye, or by the eye upon the mind, by which things distant or future are perceived, and seen as if they were present. A man on a journey far from home falls from his horse; another, who is perhaps at work about the house, sees him bleeding on the ground, commonly with a landscape of the place where the accident befalls him. Another seer, driving home his cattle, or wandering in idleness, or musing in the sunshine, is suddenly surprised by the appearance of a bridal ceremony, or funeral procession, and counts the mourners, or attendants, of whom, if he knows them, he relates the names, if he knows them not, he can describe the dresses. Things distant are seen at the instant when they happen. Of things future I know not that there is any rule for determining the time between the sight and the event.

This receptive faculty, for power it cannot be called, is neither voluntary nor constant. The appearances have no dependence upon choice: they

cannot be summoned, detained, or recalled. The impression is sudden, and the effect often painful.

By the term Second Sight, seems to be meant a mode of seeing, superadded to that which nature generally bestows. In the Erse it is called Taisch; which signifies likewise a spectre, or a vision. I know not, nor is it likely that the Highlanders ever examined, whether by Taisch, used for Second Sight, they mean the power of seeing, or the thing seen.

I do not find it to be true, as it is reported, that to the Second Sight nothing is presented but phantoms of evil. Good seems to have the same proportion in those visionary scenes, as it obtains in real life: almost all remarkable events have evil for their basis, and are either miseries incurred, or miseries escaped. Our sense is so much stronger of what we suffer, than of what we enjoy, that the ideas of pain predominate in almost every mind. What is recollection but a revival of vexations, or history, but a record of wars, treasons, and calamities? Death, which is considered as the greatest evil, happens to all. The greatest good, be it what it will, is the lot but of a part.

That they should often see death is to be expected; because death is an event frequent and important. But they see likewise more pleasing

incidents. A gentleman told me, that when he had once gone far from his own island, one of his labouring servants predicted his return, and described the livery of his attendant, which he had never worn at home; and which had been, without any previous design, occasionally given him.

Our desire of information was keen, and our inquiry frequent. Mr. Boswell's frankness and gaiety made every body communicative; and we heard many tales of these airy shows, with more or less evidence and distinctness.

It is the common talk of the Lowland Scots, that the notions of the Second Sight is wearing away with other superstitions; and that its reality is no longer supposed, but by the grossest people. How far its prevalence ever extended, or what ground it has lost, I know not. The islanders of all degrees, whether of rank or understanding, universally admit it, except the ministers, who universally deny it, and are suspected to deny it, in consequence of a system, against conviction. One of them honestly told me, that he came to Skye with a resolution not to believe it.

Strong reasons for incredulity will readily occur. This faculty of seeing things out of sight is local, and commonly useless. It is a breach of the common order of things, without any visible reason or perceptible benefit. It is ascribed only

to a people very little enlightened; and among them, for the most part, to the mean and ignorant.

To the confidence of these objections, it may be replied, that by presuming to determine what is fit, and what is beneficial, they presuppose more knowledge of the universal system than man has attained; and therefore depend upon principles too complicated and extensive for our comprehension; and that there can be no security in the consequence, when the premises are not understood; that the Second Sight is only wonderful because it is rare, for, considered in itself, it involves no more difficulty than dreams, or perhaps than the regular exercise of the cogitative faculty; that a general opinion of communicative impulses, or visionary representations, has prevailed in all ages and all nations; that particular instances have been given, with such evidence as neither Bacon nor Bayle has been able to resist; that sudden impressions, which the event has verified, have been felt by more than own or publish them; that the Second Sight of the Hebrides implies only the local frequency of a power which is no where totally unknown; and that where we are unable to decide by antecedent reason, we must be content to yield to the force of testimony.

By pretensions to Second Sight, no profit was

ever sought or gained. It is an involuntary affection, in which neither hope nor fear are known to have any part. Those who profess to feel it do not boast of it as a privilege, nor are considered by others as advantageously distinguished. They have no temptation to feign; and their hearers have no motive to encourage the imposture.

To talk with any of these seers is not easy. There is one living in Skye, with whom we would have gladly conversed; but he was very gross and ignorant, and knew no English. The proportion in these countries of the poor to the rich is such, that if we suppose the quality to be accidental, it can very rarely happen to a man of education; and yet on such men it has sometimes fallen. There is now a second sighted gentleman in the Highlands. who complains of the terrors to which he is exposed.

The foresight of the seers is not always prescience: they are impressed with images, of which the event only shows them the meaning. They tell what they have seen to others, who are at that time not more knowing than themselves, but may become at last very adequate witnesses, by comparing the narrative with its verification.

To collect sufficient testimonies for the satisfaction of the public, or of ourselves, would have required more time than we could bestow. There

is against it, the seeming analogy of things confusedly seen, and little understood; and for it, the indistinct cry of national persuasion, which may be perhaps resolved at last into prejudice and tradition. I never could advance my curiosity to conviction; but came away at last only willing to believe.

As there subsists no longer in the islands much of that peculiar and discriminative form of life, of which the idea had delighted our imagination, we were willing to listen to such accounts of past times as would be given us. But we soon found what memorials were to be expected from an illiterate people, whose whole time is a series of distress; where every morning is labouring with expedients for the evening; and where all mental pains or pleasure arose from the dread of winter, the expectation of the spring, the caprices of their chiefs, and the motions of the neighbouring clans; where there was neither shame from ignorance, nor pride in knowledge; neither curiosity to inquire, nor vanity to communicate.

The chiefs, indeed, were exempt from urgent penury and daily difficulties; and in their houses were preserved what accounts remained of past ages. But the chiefs were sometimes ignorant and careless, and sometimes kept busy by turbulence and contention; and one generation of igno-

rance effaces the whole series of unwritten history. Books are faithful repositories, which may be a while neglected or forgotten; but when they are opened again, will again impart their instruction: memory, once interrupted, is not to be recalled. Written learning is a fixed luminary, which, after the cloud that had hidden it has past away, is again bright in its proper station. Tradition is but a meteor, which, if once it falls, cannot be rekindled.

It seems to be universally supposed, that much of the local history was preserved by the bards, of whom one is said to have been retained by every great family. After these bards were some of my first inquiries; and I received such answers as, for a while, made me please myself with my increase of knowledge, for I had not then learned how to estimate the narration of a Highlander.

They said that a great family had a bard and a senachie, who were the poet and historian of the house; and an old gentleman told me that he remembered one of each. Here was a dawn of intelligence. Of men that had lived within memory, some certain knowledge might be attained. Though the office had ceased, its effects might continue; the poems might be found though there was no poet.

Another conversation, indeed, informed me,

that the same man was both bard and senachie. This variation discouraged me; but as the practice might be different in different times, or at the same time in different families, there was yet no reason for supposing that I must necessarily sit down in total ignorance.

Soon after I was told by a gentleman, who is generally acknowledged the greatest master of Hebridian antiquities, that there had indeed once been both bards and senachies; and that senachie signified the man of talk, or of conversation; but that neither bard nor senachie had existed for some centuries. I have no reason to suppose it exactly known at what time the custom ceased, nor did it probably cease in all houses at once. But whenever the practice of recitation was disused, the works, whether poetical or historical, perished with the authors; for in those times nothing had been written in the Erse language.

Whether the man of talk was an historian, whose office was to tell truth, or a story-teller, like those which were in the last century, and perhaps are now among the Irish, whose trade was only to amuse, it now would be vain to inquire.

Most of the domestic offices were, I believe, hereditary; and probably the laureat of a clan was always the son of the last laureat. The history of

the race could no otherwise be communicated or retained; but what genius could be expected in a poet by inheritance?

The nation was wholly illiterate. Neither bards nor senachies could write or read; but if they were ignorant, there was no danger of detection; they were believed by those whose vanity they flattered.

The recital of genealogies, which has been considered as very efficacious to the preservation of a true series of ancestry, was anciently made when the heir of the family came to manly age. This practice has never subsisted within time of memory, nor was much credit due to such rehearsers, who might obtrude fictitious pedigrees, either to please their masters, or to hide the deficiency of their own memories.

Where the chiefs of the Highlands have found the histories of their descent is difficult to tell; for no Erse genealogy was ever written. In general this only is evident, that the principal house of a clan must be very ancient, and that those must have lived long in a place, of whom it is not known when they came thither.

Thus hopeless are all attempts to find any traces of Highland learning. Nor are their primitive customs and ancient manner of life otherwise

than very faintly and uncertainly remembered by the present race.

The peculiarities which strike the native of a commercial country, proceeded in a great measure from the want of money. To the servants and dependants that were not domestics, (and, if an estimate be made from the capacity of any of their old houses which I have seen, their domestics could have been but few,) were appropriated certain portions of land for their support. Macdonald has a piece of ground yet, called the bards' or senachies' field. When a beef was killed for the house, particular parts were claimed as fees by the several officers, or workmen. What was the right of each I have not learned. The head belonged to the smith, and the udder of a cow to the piper; the weaver had likewise his particular part; and so many pieces followed these prescriptive claims, that the laird's was at last but little.

The payment of rent in kind has been so long disused in England, that it is totally forgotten. It was practised very lately in the Hebrides, and probably still continues, not only at St. Kilda, where money is not yet known, but in others of the smaller and remoter islands. It were perhaps to be desired, that no change in this particular should have been made. When the laird could

only eat the produce of his lands, he was under the necessity of residing upon them; and when the tenant could not convert his stock into more portable riches, he could never be tempted away from his farm, from the only place where he could be wealthy. Money confounds subordination, by overpowering the distinctions of rank and birth, and weakens authority, by supplying power of resistance, or expedients for escape. The feudal system is formed for a nation employed in agriculture, and has never long kept its hold where gold and silver have become common.

Their arms were anciently the claymore, or great twohanded sword, and afterwards the two-edged sword and target, or buckler, which was sustained on the left arm. In the midst of the target, which was made of wood covered with leather, and studded with nails, a slender lance, about two feet long, was sometimes fixed; it was heavy and cumbrous, and accordingly has for sometime past been gradually laid aside. Very few targets were at Culloden. The dirk, or broad dagger, I am afraid, was of more use in private quarrels than in battles. The Lochaber axe is only a slight alteration of the old English bill.

After all that has been said of the force and terror of the Highland sword, I could not find that the art of defence was any part of common

education. The gentlemen were perhaps sometimes skilful gladiators, but the common men had no other powers than those of violence and courage. Yet it is well known, that the onset of the Highlanders was very formidable. As an army cannot consist of philosophers, a panic is easily excited by any unwonted mode of annoyance. New dangers are naturally magnified; and men accustomed only to exchange bullets at a distance, and rather to hear their enemies than see them, are discouraged and amazed when they find themselves encountered hand to hand, and catch the gleam of steel flashing in their faces.

The Highland weapons gave opportunity for many exertions of personal courage, and sometimes for single combats in the field; like those which occur so frequently in fabulous wars. At Falkirk, a gentleman now living was, I suppose, after the retreat of the king's troops, engaged at a distance from the rest with an Irish dragoon. They were both skilful swordsmen, and the contest was not easily decided: the dragoon at last had the advantage, and the Highlander called for quarter; but quarter was refused him, and the fight continued till he was reduced to defend himself upon his knee. At that instant one of the Macleods came to his rescue; who, as it is said, offered quarter to the dragoon, but he thought

himself obliged to reject what he had before refused, and, as battle gives little time to deliberate, was immediately killed.

Funerals were formerly solemnized by calling multitudes together, and entertaining them at a great expense. This emulation of useless cost has been for some time discouraged, and at last, in the isle of Skye, is almost suppressed.

Of the Erse language, as I understand nothing, I cannot say more than I have been told. It is the rude speech of a barbarous people, who had few thoughts to express, and were content, as they conceived grossly, to be grossly understood. After what has been lately talked of Highland bards, and Highland genius, many will startle when they are told, that the Erse never was a written language; that there is not in the world an Erse manuscript a hundred years old; and that the sounds of the Highlanders were never expressed by letters, till some little books of piety were translated, and a metrical version of the Psalms was made by the synod of Argyle. Whoever, therefore, now writes in this language, spells according to his own perception of the sound, and his own idea of the power of the letters. The Welsh and the Irish are cultivated tongues. The Welsh, two hundred years ago, insulted their English neighbours for the instability of their

orthography; while the Erse merely floated in the breath of the people, and could therefore receive little improvement.

When a language begins to teem with books, it is tending to refinement; as those who undertake to teach others must have undergone some labour in improving themselves, they set a proportionate value on their own thoughts, and wish to enforce them by efficacious expressions; speech becomes embodied and permanent; different modes and phrases are compared, and the best obtains an establishment. By degrees, one age improves upon another. Exactness is first obtained, and afterwards elegance. But diction, merely vocal, is always in its childhood. As no man leaves his eloquence behind him, the new generations have all to learn. There may possibly be books without a polished language, but there can be no polished language without books.

That the bards could not read more than the rest of their countrymen, it is reasonable to suppose; because, if they had read, they could probably have written; and how high their compositions may reasonably be rated, an inquirer may best judge by considering what stores of imagery, what principles of ratiocination, what comprehension of knowledge, and what delicacy of elocution he has known any man attain who cannot read.

The state of the bards was yet more hopeless. He that cannot read may now converse with those that can; but the bard was a barbarian among barbarians, who, knowing nothing himself, lived with others that knew no more.

There has lately been in the islands one of these illiterate poets, who hearing the Bible read at church, is said to have turned the sacred history into verse. I heard part of a dialogue, composed by him, translated by a young lady in Mull, and thought it had more meaning than I expected from a man totally uneducated; but he had some opportunities of knowledge; he lived among a learned people. After all that has been done for the instruction of the Highlanders, the antipathy between their language and literature still continues; and no man that has learned only Erse, is at this time able to read.

The Erse has many dialects, and the words used in some islands are not always known in others. In literate nations, though the pronunciation, and sometimes the words of common speech, may differ, as now in England, compared with the south of Scotland, yet there is a written diction, which pervades all dialects, and is understood in every province. But where the whole language is colloquial, he that has only one part never gets

the rest, as he cannot get it but by change of residence.

In an unwritten speech, nothing that is not very short is transmitted from one generation to another. Few have opportunities of hearing a long composition often enough to learn it, or have inclination to repeat it so often as is necessary to retain it; and what is once forgotten is lost for ever. I believe there cannot be recovered in the whole Erse language, five hundred lines of which there is any evidence to prove them a hundred years old. Yet I hear that the father of Ossian boasts of two chests more of ancient poetry, which he suppresses, because they are too good for the English.

He that goes into the Highlands with a mind naturally acquiescent, and a credulity eager for wonders, may come back with an opinion very different from mine; for the inhabitants, knowing the ignorance of all strangers in their language and antiquities, perhaps are not very scrupulous adherents to truth; yet I do not say that they deliberately speak studied falsehood, or have a settled purpose to deceive. They have inquired and considered little, and do not always feel their own ignorance. They are not much accustomed to be interrogated by others: and seem never to

have thought upon interrogating themselves; so that if they do not know what they tell to be true, they likewise do not distinctly perceive it to be false.

Mr. Boswell was very diligent in his inquiries; and the result of his investigations was, that the answer to the second question was commonly such as nullified the answer to the first.

We were a while told, that they had an old translation of the scriptures; and told it till it would appear obstinacy to inquire again. Yet by continued accumulation of questions we found, that the translation meant, if any meaning there were, was nothing else than the Irish Bible.

We heard of manuscripts that were, or that had been, in the hands of somebody's father, or grandfather; but at last we had no reason to believe they were other than Irish. Martin mentions Irish, but never any Erse manuscripts, to be found in the islands in his time.

I suppose my opinion of the poems of Ossian is already discovered. I believe they never existed in any other form than that which we have seen. The editor, or author, never could show the original; nor can it be shown by any other; to revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence, with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn auda-

city is the last refuge of guilt. It would be easy to show it if he had it; but whence could it be had? It is too long to be remembered, and the language formerly had nothing written. He has doubtless inserted names that circulated in popular stories, and may have translated some wandering ballads, if any can be found; and the names, and some of the images, being recollected, make an inaccurate auditor imagine, by the help of Caledonian bigotry, that he has formerly heard the whole.

I asked a very learned minister in Skye, who had used all arts to make me believe the genuineness of the book, whether at last he believed it himself? but he would not answer. He wished me to be deceived for the honour of his country; but would not directly and formally deceive me. Yet has this man's testimony been publicly produced, as of one that held Fingal to be the work of Ossian.

It is said, that some men of integrity profess to have heard parts of it, but they all heard them when they were boys; and it was never said that any of them could recite six lines. They remember names, and perhaps some proverbial sentiments; and having no distinct ideas, coin a resemblance without an original. The persuasion of the Scots, however, is far from universal; and in a question so capable of proof, why should doubt be suffered

to continue? The editor has been heard to say, that part of the poem was received by him in the Saxon character. He has then found, by some peculiar fortune, an unwritten language, written in a character which the natives probably never beheld.

I have yet supposed no imposture but in the publisher; yet I am far from certainty, that some translations have not been lately made, that may now be obtruded as parts of the original work. Credulity on one part is a strong temptation to deceit on the other, especially to deceit of which no personal injury is the consequence, and which flatters the author with his own ingenuity. The Scots have something to plead for their easy reception of an improbable fiction: they are seduced by their fondness for their supposed ancestors. A Scotchman must be a very sturdy moralist, who does not love Scotland better than truth; he will always love it better than inquiry: and if falsehood flatters his vanity, will not be very diligent to detect it. Neither ought the English to be much influenced by Scotch authority; for of the past and present state of the whole Erse nation, the Lowlanders are at least as ignorant as ourselves. To be ignorant is painful; but it is dangerous to quiet our uneasiness by the delusive opiate of hasty persuasion.

But this is the age in which those who could not read, have been supposed to write: in which the giants of antiquated romance have been exhibited as realities. If we know little of the ancient Highlanders, let us not fill the vacuity with Ossian. If we have not searched the Magellanic regions, let us however forbear to people them with Patagons.

Having waited some days at Armidel, we were flattered at last with a wind that promised to convey us to Mull. We went on board a boat that was taking in kelp, and left the isle of Skye behind us. We were doomed to experience, like others, the danger of trusting to the wind, which blew against us, in a short time, with such violence, that we, being no seasoned sailors, were willing to call it a tempest. I was seasick, and lay down. Mr. Boswell kept the deck. The master knew not well whither to go; and our difficulties might perhaps have filled a very pathetic page, had not Mr. Maclean of Col, who, with every other qualification which insular life requires, is a very active and skilful mariner, piloted us safe into his own harbour.

Col.

In the morning we found ourselves under the isle of Col, where we landed; and passed the first day and night with Captain Maclean, a gentleman who has lived some time in the East Indies, but having dethroned no Nabob, is not too rich to settle in his own country.

Next day the wind was fair, and we might have had an easy passage to Mull; but having, contrarily to our own intention, landed upon a new island, we would not leave it wholly unexamined. We therefore suffered the vessel to depart without us, and trusted the skies for another wind.

Mr. Maclean of Col, having a very numerous family, has, for some time past, resided at Aberdeen, that he may superintend their education, and leaves the young gentleman, our friend, to govern his dominions, with the full power of a Highland chief. By the absence of the laird's family, our entertainment was made more difficult, because the house was in a great degree disfurnished; but young Col's kindness and activity supplied all defects, and procured us more than sufficient accommodation.

Here I first mounted a little Highland steed; and if there had been many spectators, should

have been somewhat ashamed of my figure in the march. The horses of the islands, as of other barren countries, are very low: they are indeed musculous and strong, beyond what their size gives reason for expecting; but a bulky man upon one of their backs makes a very disproportionate appearance.

From the habitation of Captain Maclean we went to Grissipol, but called by the way on Mr. Hector Maclean, the minister of Col, whom we found in a hut, that is, a house of only one floor, but with windows and chimney, and not inelegantly furnished. Mr. Maclean has the reputation of great learning: he is seventy-seven years old, but not infirm, with a look of venerable dignity excelling what I remember in any other man.

His conversation was not unsuitable to his appearance. I lost some of his good will, by treating a heretical writer with more regard, than in his opinion, a heretic could deserve. I honoured his orthodoxy, and did not much censure his asperity. A man who has settled his opinions, does not love to have the tranquillity of his conviction disturbed; and at seventy-seven it is time to be in earnest.

Mention was made of the Erse translation of the New Testament, which has been lately published, and of which the learned Mr. Macqueen of Skye spoke with commendation; but Mr. Maclean

said, he did not use it, because he could make the text more intelligible to his auditors by an extemporary version. From this I inferred, that the language of the translation was not the language of the isle of Col.

He has no public edifice for the exercise of his ministry; and can officiate to no greater number than a room can contain; and the room of a hut is not very large. This is all the opportunity of worship that is now granted to the inhabitants of the island, some of whom must travel thither perhaps ten miles. Two chapels were erected by their ancestors, of which I saw the skeletons, which now stand faithful witnesses of the triumph of Reformation.

The want of churches is not the only impediment to piety: there is likewise a want of ministers. A parish often contains more islands than one; and each island can have the minister only in its own turn. At Raasay, they had, I think, a right to service only every third Sunday. All the provision made by the present ecclesiastical constitution, for the inhabitants of about a hundred square miles, is a prayer and sermon in a little room, once in three weeks; and even this parsimonious distribution is at the mercy of the weather: and in those islands where the minister does not reside, it is impossible to tell how many

weeks or months may pass without any public exercise of religion.

Grissipol in Col.

After a short conversation with Mr. Maclean, we went on to Grissipol, a house and farm tenanted by Mr. Macsweyn, where I saw more of the ancient life of a Highlander than I had yet found. Mrs. Macsweyn could speak no English, and had never seen any other places than the islands of Skye, Mull, and Col: but she was hospitable and good-humoured, and spread her table with sufficient liberality. We found tea here, as in every other place, but our spoons were of horn.

The house of Grissipol stands by a brook very clear and quick; which is, I suppose, one of the most copious streams in the island. This place was the scene of an action, much celebrated in the traditional history of Col, but which probably no two relaters will tell alike.

Some time, in the obscure ages, Macneil of Barra married the lady Maclean, who had the isle of Col for her jointure. Whether Macneil detained Col, when the widow was dead, or whether she lived so long as to make her heirs impatient, is perhaps not now known. The younger son, called John Gerves, or John the Giant, a man of great strength.

who was then in Ireland, either for safety or for education, dreamed of recovering his inheritance; and getting some adventurers together, which in those unsettled times was not hard to do, invaded Col. He was driven away, but was not discouraged, and collecting new followers, in three years came again with fifty men. In his way he stopped at Artorinish in Morven, where his uncle was prisoner to Macleod, and was then with his enemies in a tent. Maclean took with him only one servant, whom he ordered to stay at the outside; and where he should see the tent pressed outwards, to strike with his dirk; it being the intention of Maclean, as any man provoked him, to lay hands upon him, and push him back. He entered the tent alone, with his Lochaber axe in his hand, and struck such terror into the whole assembly, that they dismissed his uncle.

When he landed at Col, he saw the sentinel, who kept watch towards the sea, running off to Grissipol, to give Macneil, who was there with a hundred and twenty men, an account of the invasion. He told Macgill, one of his followers, that if he intercepted that dangerous intelligence, by catching the courier, he would give him certain lands in Mull. Upon this promise, Macgill pursued the messenger, and either killed or stopped

him; and his posterity, till very lately, held the lands in Mull.

The alarm being thus prevented, he came unexpectedly upon Macneil. Chiefs were in those days never wholly unprovided for an enemy. A fight ensued, in which one of their followers is said to have given an extraordinary proof of activity, by bounding backwards over the brook of Grissipol. Macneil being killed, and many of his clan destroyed, Maclean took possession of the island, which the Macneils attempted to conquer by another invasion, but were defeated and repulsed.

Maclean, in his turn, invaded the estate of the Macneils, took the castle of Brecacig, and conquered the isle of Barra, which he held for seven years, and then restored it to the heirs.

Castle of Col.

From Grissipol Mr. Maclean conducted us to his father's seat; a neat new house erected near the old castle, I think, by the last proprietor. Here we were allowed to take our station, and lived very commodiously, while we waited for moderate weather and a fair wind, which we did not so soon obtain, but we had time to get some information

of the present state of Col, partly by inquiry, and partly by occasional excursions.

Col is computed to be thirteen miles in length, and three in breadth. Both the ends are the property of the Duke of Argyle, but the middle belongs to Maclean, who is called Col, as the only laird.

Col is not properly rocky; it is rather one continued rock, of a surface much diversified with protuberances, and covered with a thin layer of earth, which is often broken, and discovers the stone. Such a soil is not for plants that strike deep roots; and perhaps in the whole island nothing has ever yet grown to the height of a table. The uncultivated parts are clothed with heath, among which industry has interspersed spots of grass and corns; but no attempt has been made to raise a tree. Young Col, who has a very laudable desire of improving his patrimony, purposes some time to plant an orchard; which, if it be sheltered by a wall, may perhaps succeed. He has introduced the culture of turnips, of which he has a field, where the whole work was performed by his own hand. His intention is to provide food for his cattle in the winter. This innovation was considered by Mr. Macsweyn as the idle project of a young head, heated with English fancies; but he

has now found that turnips will really grow, and that hungry sheep and cows will really eat them.

By such acquisitions as these, the Hebrides may in time rise above their annual distress. Where-ever heath will grow, there is reason to think something better may draw nourishment; and by trying the production of other places, plants will be found suitable to every soil.

Col has many lochs, some of which have trouts and eels, and others have never yet been stocked; another proof of the negligence of the islanders, who might take fish in the inland waters when they cannot go to sea.

Their quadrupeds are horses, cows, sheep, and goats. They have neither deer, hares, nor rabbits. They have no vermin except rats, which have been lately brought thither by sea, as to other places; and are free from serpents, frogs, and toads.

The harvest in Col and in Lewis, is ripe sooner than in Skye, and the winter in Col is never cold, but very tempestuous. I know not that I ever heard the wind so loud in any other place; and Mr. Boswell observed that its noise was all its own, for there was no trees to increase it.

Noise is not the worst effect of the tempests. for they have thrown sand from the shore over a considerable part of the land, and is said still to

encroach and destroy more and more pasture; but I am not of opinion, that by any surveys or land-marks, its limits have been ever fixed, or its progression ascertained. If one man has confidence enough to say, that it advances, nobody can bring any proof to support him in denying it. The reason why it is not spread to a greater extent, seems to be, that the wind and rain come almost together, and that it is made close and heavy by the wet before the storms can put it in motion. So thick is the bed, and so small the particles, that if a traveller should be caught by a sudden gust in dry weather, he would find it very difficult to escape with life.

For natural curiosities I was shown only two great masses of stone, which lie loose upon the ground; one on the top of a hill, and the other at a small distance from the bottom. They certainly were never put into their present places by human strength or skill; and though an earthquake might have broken off the lower stone, and rolled it into the valley, no account can be given of the other, which lies on the hill, unless, which I forgot to examine, there be still near it some higher rock, from which it might be torn. All nations have a tradition, that their earliest ancestors were giants, and these stones are said to have been thrown up and down by a giant and his mistress. There are

so many more important things of which human knowledge can give no account, that it may be forgiven us, if we speculate no longer on two stones in Col.

This island is very populous. About nine-and-twenty years ago, the fencible men of Col were reckoned one hundred and forty; which is the sixth of eight hundred and forty; and probably some contrived to be left out of the list. The minister told us, that a few years ago the inhabitants were eight hundred, between the ages of seven and of seventy. Round numbers are seldom exact. But in this case the authority is good, and the error likely to be little. If to the eight hundred be added what the laws of computation require, they will be increased to at least a thousand; and if the dimensions of the country have been accurately related, every mile maintains more than twenty-five.

This proportion of habitation is greater than the appearance of the country seems to admit; for wherever the eye wanders, it seems much waste, and little cultivation. I am more inclined to extend the land, of which no measure has ever been taken, than to diminish the people, who have been really numbered. Let it be supposed, that a computed mile contains a mile and a half, as was commonly found true in the mensuration of the

English roads, and we shall then allot nearly twelve to a mile, which agrees much better with ocular observation.

Here, as in Skye, and other islands, are the laird, the tacksmen, and the under-tenants.

Mr. Maclean, the laird, has very extensive possessions, being proprietor, not only of far the greater part of Col, but of the extensive island of Rum, and a very considerable territory in Mull.

Rum is one of the larger islands, almost square, and therefore of great capacity in proportion to its sides. By the usual method of estimating computed extent, it may contain more than a hundred and twenty square miles.

It originally belonged to Clanronald, and was purchased by Col; who, in some dispute about the bargain, made Clanronald prisoner, and kept him nine months in confinement. Its owner represents it as mountainous, rugged, and barren. In the hills there are red deer. The horses are very small, but of a breed eminent for beauty. Col, not long ago, bought one of them from a tenant; who told him, that as he was of a shape uncommonly elegant, he could not sell him but at a high price; and that whoever had him should pay a guinea and a half.

There are said to be in Barra a race of horses

yet smaller, of which the highest is not above thirty-six inches.

The rent of Rum is not great. Mr. Maclean declared that he should be very rich, if he could set his land at twopence halfpenny an acre. The inhabitants are fifty-eight families, who continued papists for some time after the laird became a protestant. Their adherence to their old religion was strengthened by the countenance of the laird's sister, a zealous Romanist, till one Sunday, as they were going to mass under the conduct of their patroness, Maclean met them on the way, gave one of them a blow on the head with a yellow stick, I suppose a cane, for which the Erse had no name, and drove them to the kirk, from which they have never since departed. Since the use of this method of conversion, the inhabitants of Egg and Canna, who continue papists, call the protestantism of Rum the religion of the Yellow Stick.

The only popish islands are Egg and Canna. Egg is the principal island of a parish, in which, though he has no congregation, the protestant minister resides. I have heard of nothing curious in it, but the cave in which a former generation of the islanders were smothered by Macleod.

If we had travelled with more leisure, it had not been fit to have neglected the popish islands.

Popery is favourable to ceremony; and among ignorant nations ceremony is the only preservative of tradition. Since protestantism was extended to the savage parts of Scotland, it has perhaps been one of the chief labours of the ministers to abolish stated observances, because they continued the remembrance of the former religion. We, therefore, who came to hear old traditions, and see antiquated manners, should probably have found them amongst the papists.

Canna, the other popish island, belongs to Clanronald. It is said not to comprise more than twelve miles of land, and yet maintains as many inhabitants as Rum.

We were at Col under the protection of the young laird, without any of the distresses which Mr. Pennant, in a fit of simple credulity, seems to think almost worthy of an elegy by Ossian. Wherever we roved, we were pleased to see the reverence with which his subjects regarded him. He did not endeavour to dazzle them by any magnificence of dress: his only distinction was a feather in his bonnet; but as soon as he appeared, they forsook their work and clustered about him: he took them by the hand, and they seemed mutually delighted. He has the proper disposition of a chieftain, and seems desirous to continue the customs of his house. The bagpiper played regu-

larly, when dinner was served, whose person and dress made a good appearance; and he brought no disgrace upon the family of Rankin, which has long supplied the lairds of Col with hereditary music.

The tacksmen of Col seem to live with less dignity and convenience than those of Skye; where they had good houses, and tables not only plentiful, but delicate. In Col only two houses pay the window tax; for only two have six windows, which, I suppose, are the laird's and Mr. Macsweyn's.

The rents have, till within seven years, been paid in kind; but the tenants finding that cattle and corn varied in their price, desired for the future to give their landlord money; which, not having yet arrived at the philosophy of commerce, they consider as being every year of the same value.

We were told of a particular mode of undertenure. The tacksman admits some of his inferior neighbours to the cultivation of his grounds, on condition that, performing all the work, and giving a third part of the seed, they shall keep a certain number of cows, sheep, and goats, and reap a third part of the harvest. Thus by less than the tillage of two acres they pay the rent of one.

There are tenants below the rank of tacksmen,

that have got smaller tenants under them; for in every place, where money is not the general equivalent, there must be some whose labour is immediately paid by daily food.

A country that has no money, is by no means convenient for beggars, both because such countries are commonly poor, and because charity requires some trouble and some thought. A penny is easily given upon the first impulse of compassion, or impatience of importunity; but few will deliberately search their cupboards or their granaries to find out something to give. A penny is likewise easily spent; but victuals, if they are unprepared, require house-room, and fire, and utensils, which the beggar knows not where to find.

Yet beggars there sometimes are, who wander from island to island. We had, in our passage to Mull, the company of a woman and her child, who had exhausted the charity of Col. The arrival of a beggar on an island is accounted a sinistrous event. Every body considers that he shall have the less for what he gives away. Their alms, I believe, is generally oatmeal.

Near to Col is another island called Tirey, eminent for its fertility. Though it has but half the extent of Rum, it is so well peopled, that there have appeared, not long ago, nine hundred

and fourteen at a funeral. The plenty of this island enticed beggars to it, who seemed so burthensome to the inhabitants, that a formal compact was drawn up, by which they obliged themselves to grant no more relief to casual wanderers, because they had among them an indigent woman of high birth, whom they considered as entitled to all that they could spare. I have read the stipulation, which was indited with juridical formality, but was never made valid by regular subscription.

If the inhabitants of Col have nothing to give, it is not that they are oppressed by their landlord: their leases seem to be very profitable. One farmer, who pays only seven pounds a year, has maintained seven daughters and three sons, of whom the eldest is educated at Aberdeen for the ministry; and now, at every vacation, opens a school in Col.

Life is here, in some respects, improved beyond the condition of some other islands. In Skye, what is wanted can only be bought, as the arrival of some wandering pedlar may afford an opportunity; but in Col there is a standing shop, and in Mull there are two. A shop in the islands, as in other places of little frequentation, is a repository of every thing requisite for common use. Mr. Boswell's journal was filled, and he bought some paper in Col. To a man that ranges

the streets of London, where he is tempted to contrive wants for the pleasure of supplying them, a shop affords no image worthy of attention; but in an island, it turns the balance of existence between good and evil. To live in perpetual want of little things, is a state not indeed of torture, but of constant vexation. I have in Skye had some difficulty to find ink for a letter; and if a woman breaks her needle, the work is at a stop.

As it is, the islanders are obliged to content themselves with succedaneous means for many common purposes. I have seen the chief man of a very wide district riding with a halter for a bridle, and governing his hobby with a wooden curb.

The people of Col, however, do not want dexterity to supply some of their necessities. Several arts which make trades, and demand apprenticeships in great cities, are here the practices of daily economy. In every house candles are made, both moulded and dipped. Their wicks are small shreds of linen cloth. They all know how to extract from the cuddy oil for their lamps. They all tan skins. and make brogues.

As we travelled through Skye, we saw many cottages, but they very frequently stood single on the naked ground. In Col, where the hills opened a place convenient for habitation, we found a petty

village, of which every hut had a little garden adjoining; thus they made an appearance of social commerce and mutual offices, and of some attention to convenience and future supply. There is not in the Western Islands any collection of buildings that can make pretensions to be called a town, except in the isle of Lewis, which I have not seen.

If Lewis is distinguished by a town, Col has also something peculiar. The young laird has attempted what no islander, perhaps, ever thought on. He has begun a road capable of a wheel carriage. He has carried it about a mile, and will continue it by annual elongation from his house to the harbour.

Of taxes here is no reason for complaining; they are paid by a very easy composition. The malt tax for Col is twenty shillings. Whisky is very plentiful; there are several stills in the island, and more is made than the inhabitants consume.

The great business of insular policy is now to keep the people in their own country. As the world has been let in upon them, they have heard of happier climates, and less arbitrary government; and if they are disgusted, have emissaries among them ready to offer them land and houses, as a reward for deserting their chief and clan. Many have departed both from the main of Scotland,

and from the islands; and all that go may be considered as subjects lost to the British crown; for a nation scattered in the boundless regions of America resembles rays diverging from a focus. All the rays remain, but the heat is gone. Their power consisted in their concentration: when they are dispersed, they have no effect.

It may be thought that they are happier by the change; but they are not happy as a nation, for they are a nation no longer. As they contribute not to the prosperity of any community, they must want that security, that dignity, that happiness, whatever it be, which a prosperous community throws back upon individuals.

The inhabitants of Col have not yet learned to be weary of their heath and rocks, but attend their agriculture and their dairies, without listening to American seducements.

There are some, however, who think that this emigration has raised terror disproportionate to its real evil; and that it is only a new mode of doing what was always done. The Highlands, they say, never maintained their natural inhabitants; but the people, when they found themselves too numerous, instead of extending cultivation, provided for themselves by a more compendious method, and sought better fortune in other countries. They did not, indeed, go away in collective bodies, but

withdrew invisibly, a few at a time; but the whole number of fugitives was not less, and the difference between other times and this, is only the same as between evaporation and effusion.

This is plausible, but I am afraid it is not true. Those who went before, if they were not sensibly missed, as the argument supposes, must have gone either in less number, or in a manner less detrimental than at present; because formerly there was no complaint. Those who then left the country were generally the idle dependents on overburdened families, or men who had no property; and therefore carried away only themselves. In the present eagerness of emigration, families, and almost communities, go away together. Those who were considered as prosperous and wealthy, sell their stock and carry away the money. Once none went away but the useless and poor; in some parts there is now reason to fear, that none will stay but those who are too poor to remove themselves, and too useless to be removed at the cost of others.

Of antiquity there is not more knowledge in Col than in other places; but every where something may be gleaned.

How ladies were portioned, when there was no money, it would be difficult for an Englishman to guess. In 1649, Maclean of Dronart, in Mull,

married his sister Fingala to Maclean of Col, with a hundred and eighty kine; and stipulated, that if she became a widow, her jointure should be three hundred and sixty. I suppose some proportionate tract of land was appropriated to their pasturage.

The disposition to pompous and expensive funerals, which has at one time or other prevailed in most parts of the civilized world, is not yet suppressed in the islands, though some of the ancient solemnities are worn away, and singers are no longer hired to attend the procession. Nineteen years ago, at the burial of the laird of Col, were killed thirty cows, and about fifty sheep. The number of the cows is positively told, and we must suppose other victuals in like proportion.

Mr. Maclean informed us of an old game, of which he did not tell the original, but which may perhaps be used in other places, where the reason of it is not yet forgot. At New-year's eve, in the hall or castle of the laird, where, at festal seasons, there may be supposed a very numerous company, one man dresses himself in a cow's hide, upon which other men beat with sticks. He runs with all this noise round the house, which all the company quits in a counterfeited fright: the door is then shut. At New-year's eve there is no great pleasure to be had out of doors in the Hebrides. They are sure soon to recover from their terror enough to solicit

for re-admission: which, for the honour of poetry, is not to be obtained but by repeating a verse, with which those that are knowing and provident take care to be furnished.

Very near the house of Maclean stands the castle of Col, which was the mansion of the laird, till the house was built. It is built upon a rock, as Mr. Boswell remarked, that it might not be mined. It is very strong, and having been not long uninhabited, is yet in repair. On the wall was, not long ago, a stone with an inscription, importing, 'That if any man of the clan of Maclonich shall appear before this castle, though he come at midnight, with a man's head in his hand, he shall there find safety and protection against all but the king.'

This is an old Highland treaty, made upon a very memorable occasion. Maclean, the son of John Gerves, who recovered Col, and conquered Barra, had obtained, it is said, from James the Second, a grant of the lands of Lochiel, forfeited, I suppose, by some offence against the state.

Forfeited estates were not in those days quietly resigned; Maclean, therefore, went with an armed force to seize his new possessions, and, I know not for what reason, took his wife with him. The Camerons rose in defence of their chief, and a battle was fought at the head of Loch Ness, near

the place where Fort Augustus now stands, in which Lochiel obtained the victory, and Maclean, with his followers, was defeated and destroyed.

The lady fell into the hands of the conquerors, and being found pregnant, was placed in the custody of Maclonich, one of a tribe or family branched from Cameron, with orders, if she brought a boy, to destroy him, if a girl, to spare her.

Maclonich's wife, who was with child likewise, had a girl about the same time at which lady Maclean brought a boy; and Maclonich, with more generosity to his captive, than fidelity to his trust, contrived that the children should be changed.

Maclean being thus preserved from death, in time recovered his original patrimony; and in gratitude to his friend, made his castle a place of refuge to any of the clan that should think himself in danger; and as a proof of reciprocal confidence, Maclean took upon himself and his posterity the care of educating the heir of Maclonich.

This story, like all other traditions of the Highlands, is variously related; but though some circumstances are uncertain, the principal fact is true. Maclean undoubtedly owed his preservation to Maclonich; for the treaty between the two families has been strictly observed: it did not sink into disuse and oblivion, but continued in its full force while the chieftains retained their power. I

have read a demand of protection, made not more than thirty-seven years ago, for one of the Maclonichs, named Ewen Cameron, who had been accessory to the death of Macmartin, and had been banished by Lochiel, his lord, for a certain term; at the expiration of which he returned married from France; but the Macmartins, not satisfied with the punishment, when he attempted to settle, still threatened him with vengeance. He therefore asked, and obtained, shelter in the isle of Col.

The power of protection subsists no longer; but what the law permits is yet continued, and Maclean of Col now educates the heir of Maclonich.

There still remains in the islands, though it is passing fast away, the custom of fosterage. A laird, a man of wealth and eminence, sends his child, either male or female, to a tacksman, or tenant, to be fostered. It is not always his own tenant, but some distant friend, that obtains this honour; for an honour such a trust is very reasonably thought. The terms of fosterage seem to vary in different islands. In Mull, the father sends with his child a certain number of cows, to which the same number is added by the fosterer. The father appropriates a proportionable extent of ground, without rent, for their pasturage. If

every cow brings a calf, half belongs to the fosterer, and half to the child; but if there be only one calf between two cows, it is the child's, and when the child returns to the parents, it is accompanied by all the cows given, both by the father and by the fosterer, with half of the increase of the stock by propagation. These beasts are considered as a portion. and called Macalive cattle, of which the father has the produce, but is supposed not to have the full property, but to owe the same number to the child, as a portion to the daughter, or a stock for the son.

Children continue with the fosterer perhaps six years, and cannot, where this is the practice, be considered as burdensome. The fosterer, if he gives four cows, receives likewise four, and has, while the child continues with him, grass for eight without rent, with half the calves, and all the milk, for which he pays only four cows, when he dismisses his *dalt*, for that is the name for a fostered child.

Fosterage is, I believe, sometimes performed upon more liberal terms. Our friend, the young laird of Col, was fostered by Macsweyn of Grissipol. Macsweyn then lived a tenant to Sir James Macdonald in the isle of Skye; and therefore Col, whether he sent him cattle or not, could grant him no land. The dalt, however, at his return,

brought back a considerable number of Macalive cattle, and of the friendship so formed there have been good effects. When Macdonald raised his rents, Macsweyn was, like other tenants, discontented, and, resigning his farm, removed from Skye to Col, and was established at Grissipol.

These observations we made by favour of the contrary wind that drove us to Col, an island not often visited; for there is not much to amuse curiosity, or to attract avarice.

The ground has been hitherto, I believe, used chiefly for pasturage. In a district, such as the eye can command, there is a general herdsman, who knows all the cattle of the neigbourhood, and whose station is upon a hill, from which he surveys the lower grounds; and if one man's cattle invade another's grass, drives them back to their own borders. But other means of profit begin to be found; kelp is gathered and burnt, and sloops are loaded with the concreted ashes. Cultivation is likely to be improved by the skill and encouragement of the present heir, and the inhabitants of those obscure valleys will partake of the general progress of life.

The rents of the parts which belong to the duke of Argyle, have been raised from fifty-five to one hundred and five pounds, whether from the land or the sea I cannot tell. The bounties of the sea

have lately been so great, that a farm in South Uist has risen in ten years from a rent of thirty pounds to one hundred and eighty.

He who lives in Col, and finds himself condemned to solitary meals, and incommunicable reflection, will find the usefulness of that middle order of tacksmen, which some who applaud their own wisdom are wishing to destroy. Without intelligence, man is not social, he is only gregarious; and little intelligence will there be, where all are constrained to daily labour, and every mind must wait upon the hand.

After having listened for some days to the tempest, and wandered about the island till our curiosity was satisfied, we began to think about our departure. To leave Col in October was not very easy. We, however, found a sloop which lay on the coast to carry kelp; and for a price, which we thought levied upon our necessities, the master agreed to carry us to Mull, whence we might readily pass back to Scotland.

Mull.

As we were to catch the first favourable breath, we spent the night not very elegantly nor pleasantly in the vessel, and were landed next day at Tabor Morar, a port in Mull, which appears to an unexperienced eye formed for the security of ships; for its mouth is closed by a small island, which admits them through narrow channels into a bason sufficiently capacious. They are indeed safe from the sea, but there is a hollow between the mountains, through which the wind issues from the land with very mischievous violence.

There was no danger while we were there, and we found several other vessels at anchor; so that the port had a very commercial appearance.

The young laird of Col, who had determined not to let us lose his company, while there was any difficulty remaining, came over with us. His influence soon appeared; for he procured us horses, and conducted us to the house of doctor Maclean, where we found very kind entertainment and very pleasing conversation. Miss Maclean, who was born, and had been bred at Glasgow, having removed with her father to Mull, added to other qualifications, a great knowledge of the Erse language, which she had not learned in her childhood,

but gained by study, and was the only interpreter of Erse poetry that I could ever find.

The isle of Mull is perhaps in extent the third of the Hebrides. It is not broken by waters, nor shot into promontories, but is a solid and compact mass, of breadth nearly equal to its length. Of the dimensions of the larger islands, there is no knowledge approaching to exactness. I am willing to estimate it as containing about three hundred square miles.

Mull had suffered like Skye by the black winter of seventy-one, in which, contrary to all experience, a continued frost detained the snow eight weeks upon the ground. Against a calamity never known, no provision had been made, and the people could only pine in helpless misery. One tenant was mentioned, whose cattle perished to the value of three hundred pounds; a loss which probably more than the life of man is necessary to repair. In countries like these, the descriptions of famine become intelligible. Where by vigorous and artful cultivation of a soil naturally fertile, there is commonly a superfluous growth both of grain and grass; where the fields are crowded with cattle; and where every hand is able to attract wealth from a distance, by making something that promotes ease, or gratifies vanity, a dear year produces only a comparative want, which is rather

seen than felt, and which terminates commonly in no worse effect, than that of condemning the lower orders of the community to sacrifice a little luxury to convenience, or at most a little convenience to necessity.

But where the climate is unkind, and the ground penurious, so that the most fruitful years produce only enough to maintain themselves; where life unimproved, and unadorned, fades into something little more than naked existence, and every one is busy for himself, without any arts by which the pleasure of others may be increased; if to the daily burden of distress any additional weight be added, nothing remains but to despair and die. In Mull the disappointment of a harvest, or a murrain among the cattle, cuts off the regular provision; and they who have no manufactures can purchase no part of the superfluities of other countries. The consequence of a bad season is here not scarcity, but emptiness; and they whose plenty was barely a supply of natural and present need, when that slender stalk fails, must perish with hunger.

All travel has its advantages. If the passenger visits better countries, he may learn to improve his own, and if fortune carries him to worse, he may learn to enjoy it.

Mr. Boswell's curiosity strongly impelled him to survey Iona, or Icolmkill, which was to the

early ages the great school of theology, and is supposed to have been the place of sepulture for the ancient kings. I, though less eager, did not oppose him.

That we might perform this expedition, it was necessary to traverse a great part of Mull. We passed a day at Dr. Maclean's, and could have been well contented to stay longer. But Col provided us horses, and we pursued our journey. This was a day of inconvenience, for the country is very rough, and my horse was but little. We travelled many hours through a track, black and barren, in which, however, there were the reliques of humanity; for we found a ruined chapel in our way.

It is natural, in traversing this gloom of desolation, to inquire, whether something may not be done to give nature a more cheerful face; and whether those hills and moors that afford heath, cannot, with a little care and labour, bear something better? The first thought that occurs is to cover them with trees, for that in many of these naked regions trees will grow, is evident, because stumps and roots are yet remaining; and the speculatist hastily proceeds to censure that negligence and laziness that has omitted for so long a time so easy an improvement.

To drop seeds into the ground, and attend

their growth, requires little labour and no skill. He who remembers that all the woods, by which the wants of man have been supplied from the Deluge till now, were self-sown, will not easily be persuaded to think all the art and preparation necessary, which the georgic writers prescribe to planters. Trees certainly have covered the earth with very little culture. They wave their tops among the rocks of Norway, and might thrive as well in the Highlands and Hebrides.

But there is a frightful interval between the seed and timber. He that calculates the growth of trees, has the unwelcome remembrance of the shortness of life driven hard upon him. He knows that he is doing what will never benefit himself; and when he rejoices to see the stem rise, is disposed to repine that another shall cut it down.

Plantation is naturally the employment of a mind unburdened with care, and vacant to futurity, saturated with present good, and at leisure to derive gratification from the prospect of posterity. He that pines with hunger, is in little care how others shall be fed. The poor man is seldom studious to make his grandson rich. It may be soon discovered, why in a place, which hardly supplies the cravings of necessity, there has been little attention to the delights of fancy, and why distant convenience is unregarded, where the

thoughts are turned with incessant solicitude upon every possibility of immediate advantage.

Neither is it quite so easy to raise large woods, as may be conceived. Trees intended to produce timber must be sown where they are to grow; and ground sown with trees must be kept useless for a long time, enclosed at an expense from which many will be discouraged by the remoteness of the profit, and watched with that attention, which, in places where it is most needed, will neither be given nor bought. That it cannot be ploughed is evident: and if cattle be suffered to graze upon it, they will devour the plants as fast as they rise. Even in coarser countries, where herds and flocks are not fed, not only the deer and the wild goats will browse upon them, but the hare and rabbit will nibble them. It is therefore reasonable to believe, what I do not remember any naturalist to have remarked, that there was a time when the world was very thinly inhabited by beasts, as well as men, and that the woods had leisure to rise high before animals had bred numbers sufficient to intercept them.

Sir James Macdonald, in part of the wastes of his territory, set or sowed trees, to the number, as I have been told, of several millions, expecting, doubtless, that they would grow up into future navies and cities; but for want of enclosure, and

of that care which is always necessary, and will hardly ever be taken, all his cost and labour have been lost, and the ground is likely to continue a useless heath.

Having not any experience of a journey in Mull, we had no doubt of reaching the sea by daylight, and therefore had not left Dr. Maclean's very early. We travelled diligently enough, but found the country, for road there was none, very difficult to pass. We were always struggling with some obstruction or other, and our vexation was not balanced by any gratification of the eye or mind. We were now long enough acquainted with hills and heath to have lost the emotion that they once raised, whether pleasing or painful, and had our mind employed only on our own fatigue. We were however sure, under Col's protection, of escaping all real evils. There was no house in Mull to which he could not introduce us. He had intended to lodge us, for that night, with a gentleman that lived upon the coast, but discovered on the way, that he then lay in bed without hope of life.

We resolved not to embarrass a family, in a time of so much sorrow, if any other expedient could be found; and as the island of Ulva was over-against us, it was determined that we should pass the strait, and have recourse to the laird, who,

like the other gentlemen of the islands, was known to Col. We expected to find a ferryboat, but when at last we came to the water, the boat was gone.

We were now again at a stop. It was the sixteenth of October, a time when it is not convenient to sleep in the Hebrides without a cover, and there was no house within our reach, but that which we had already declined.

Ulva.

While we stood deliberating, we were happily espied from an Irish ship, that lay at anchor in the strait. The master saw that we wanted a passage, and with great civility sent us his boat, which quickly conveyed us to Ulva, where we were very liberally entertained by Mr. Macquarry.

To Ulva we came in the dark, and left it before noon the next day. A very exact description therefore will not be expected. We were told, that it is an island of no great extent, rough and barren, inhabited by the Macquarrys; a clan not powerful nor numerous, but of antiquity, which most other families are content to reverence. The name is supposed to be a depravation of some other; for the Erse language does not afford it any etymology. Macquarry is proprietor both of

Ulva and some adjacent islands, among which is Staffa, so lately raised to renown by Mr. Banks.

When the islanders were reproached with their ignorance, or insensibility of the wonders of Staffa, they had not much to reply. They had indeed considered it little, because they had always seen it; and none but philosophers, nor they always, are struck with wonder, otherwise than by novelty. How would it surprise an unenlightened ploughman, to hear a company of sober men, inquiring by what power the hand tosses a stone, or why the stone, when it is tossed, falls to the ground!

Of the ancestors of Macquarry, who thus lie hid in his unfrequented island, I have found memorials in all places where they could be expected.

Inquiring after the reliques of former manners, I found that in Ulva, and, I think, no where else, is continued the payment of the *mercheta mulierum*; a fine in old times due to the laird at the marriage of a virgin. The original of this claim, as of our tenure of Borough English, is variously delivered. It is pleasant to find ancient customs in old families. This payment, like others, was, for want of money, made anciently in the produce of the land. Macquarry was used to demand a sheep, for which he now takes a crown, by that inattention to the uncertain proportion between the value and the

denomination of money, which has brought much disorder into Europe. A sheep has always the same power of supplying human wants, but a crown will bring at one time more, at another less.

Ulva was not neglected by the piety of ancient times; it has still to show what was once a church.

Inch Kenneth.

In the morning we went again into the boat, and were landed on Inch Kenneth, an island about a mile long, and perhaps half a mile broad, remarkable for pleasantness and fertility. It is verdant and grassy, and fit both for pasture and tillage; but it has no trees. Its only inhabitants were Sir Allan Maclean and two young ladies, his daughters, with their servants.

Romance does not often exhibit a scene that strikes the imagination more than this little desert, in these depths of western obscurity, occupied not by a gross herdsman, or amphibious fisherman, but by a gentleman and two ladies, of high birth, polished manners, and elegant conversation, who, in a habitation raised not very far above the ground, but furnished with unexpected neatness and convenience, practised all the kindness of hospitality, and refinement of courtesy.

Sir Allan is the chieftain of the great clan of

Maclean, which is said to claim the second place among the Highland families, yielding only to Macdonald. Though by the misconduct of his ancestors, most of the extensive territory, which would have descended to him, has been alienated, he still retains much of the dignity and authority of his birth. When soldiers were lately wanting for the American war, application was made to Sir Allan, and he nominated a hundred men for the service, who obeyed the summons, and bore arms under his command.

He had then, for some time, resided with the young ladies in Inch Kenneth, where he lives not only with plenty, but with elegance, having conveyed to his cottage a collection of books, and what else is necessary to make his hours pleasant.

When we landed, we were met by Sir Allan and the ladies, accompanied by Miss Macquarry, who had passed some time with them, and now returned to Ulva with her father.

We all walked together to the mansion, where we found one cottage for Sir Allan, and I think two more for the domestics and the offices. We entered, and wanted little that palaces afford. Our room was neatly floored and well lighted; and our dinner, which was dressed in one of the other huts, was plentiful and delicate.

In the afternoon Sir Allan reminded us, that the

day was Sunday, which he never suffered to pass without some religious distinction, and invited us to partake in his acts of domestic worship; which I hope neither Mr. Boswell nor myself will be suspected of a disposition to refuse. The elder of the ladies read the English service.

Inch Kenneth was once a seminary of ecclesiastics, subordinate, I suppose, to Icolmkill. Sir Allan had a mind to trace the foundation of the college, but neither I nor Mr. Boswell, who *bends* a keener *eye on vacancy*, were able to perceive them.

Our attention, however, was sufficiently engaged by a venerable chapel, which stands yet entire, except that the roof is gone. It is about sixty feet in length, and thirty in breadth. On one side of the altar is a bas-relief of the blessed Virgin, and by it lies a little bell; which, though cracked and without a clapper, has remained there for ages, guarded only by the venerableness of the place. The ground round the chapel is covered with grave-stones of chiefs and ladies; and still continues to be a place of sepulture.

Inch Kenneth is a proper prelude to Icolmkill. It was not without some mournful emotion that we contemplated the ruins of religious structures, and the monuments of the dead.

On the next day we took a more distinct view

of the place, and went with the boat to see oysters in the bed, out of which the boatmen forced up as many as were wanted.' Even Inch Kenneth has a subordinate island, named Sandiland, I suppose in contempt, where we landed, and found a rock, with a surface of perhaps four acres, of which one is naked stone, another spread with sand and shells, some of which I picked up for their glossy beauty, and two covered with a little earth and grass, on which Sir Allan has a few sheep. I doubt not but when there was a college at Inch Kenneth, there was a hermitage upon Sandiland.

Having wandered over those extensive plains, we committed ourselves again to the winds and waters; and after a voyage of about ten minutes. in which we met with nothing very observable, were again safe upon dry ground.

We told Sir Allan our desire of visiting Icolmkill, and entreated him to give us his protection, and his company. He thought proper to hesitate a little; but the ladies hinted, that as they knew he would not finally refuse, he would do better if he preserved the grace of ready compliance. He took their advice, and promised to carry us on the morrow in his boat.

We passed the remaining part of the day in such amusements as were in our power. Sir Allan related the American campaign, and at evening one

of the ladies played on her harpsichord, while Col and Mr. Boswell danced a Scottish reel with the other.

We could have been easily persuaded to a longer stay upon Inch Kenneth, but life will not be all passed in delight. The session at Edinburgh was approaching, from which Mr. Boswell could not be absent.

In the morning our boat was ready: it was high and strong. Sir Allan victualled it for the day, and provided able rowers. We now parted from the young laird of Col, who had treated us with so much kindness, and concluded his favours by consigning us to Sir Allan. Here we had the last embrace of this amiable man, who, while these pages were preparing to attest his virtues, perished in the passage between Ulva and Inch Kenneth.

Sir Allan, to whom the whole region was well known, told us of a very remarkable cave, to which he would show us the way. We had been disappointed already by one cave, and were not much elevated by the expectation of another.

It was yet better to see it, and we stopped at some rocks on the coast of Mull. The mouth is fortified by vast fragments of stone, over which we made our way, neither very nimbly, nor very securely. The place, however, well repaid our

trouble. The bottom, as far as the flood rushes in, was encumbered with large pebbles, but as we advanced was spread over with smooth sand. The breadth is about forty-five feet: the roof rises in an arch, almost regular, to a height which we could not measure; but I think it about thirty feet.

This part of our curiosity was nearly frustrated; for though we went to see a cave, and knew that caves are dark, we forgot to carry tapers, and did not discover our omission till we were wakened by our wants. Sir Allan then sent one of the boatmen into the country, who soon returned with one little candle. We were thus enabled to go forward, but could not venture far. Having passed inward from the sea to a great depth, we found on the right hand a narrow passage, perhaps not more than six feet wide, obstructed by great stones, over which we climbed, and came into a second cave in breadth twenty-five feet. The air in this apartment was very warm, but not oppressive, nor loaded with vapours. Our light showed no tokens of a feculent or corrupted atmosphere. Here was a square stone, called, as we were told, Fingal's Table.

If we had been provided with torches, we should have proceeded in our search, though we had already gone as far as any former adventurer, except some who are reported never to have returned:

and measuring our way back, we found it more than a hundred and sixty yards, the eleventh part of a mile.

Our measures were not critically exact, having been made with a walking pole, such as it is convenient to carry in these rocky countries, of which I guessed the length by standing against it. In this there could be no great error, nor do I much doubt but the Highlander, whom we employed, reported the number right. More nicety however is better, and no man should travel unprovided with instruments for taking heights and distances.

There is yet another cause of error not always easily surmounted, though more dangerous to the veracity of itinerary narratives, than imperfect mensuration. An observer deeply impressed by any remarkable spectacle, does not suppose that the traces will soon vanish from his mind, and having commonly no great convenience for writing, defers the description to a time of more leisure and better accommodation.

He who has not made the experiment, or who is not accustomed to require rigorous accuracy from himself, will scarcely believe how much a few hours take from certainty of knowledge, and distinctness of imagery; how the succession of objects will be broken, how separate parts will be confused, and how many particular features and

discriminations will be compressed and conglobated into one gross and general idea.

To this dilatory notation must be imputed the false relations of travellers, where there is no imaginable motive to deceive. They trusted to memory what cannot be trusted safely but to the eye, and told by guess what a few hours before they had known with certainty. Thus it was that Wheeler and Spen described with irreconcileable contrariety things which they surveyed together, and which both undoubtedly designed to show as they saw them.

When we had satisfied our curiosity in the cave, so far as our penury of light permitted us, we clambered again to our boats, and proceeded along the coast of Mull to a headland, called Atun, remarkable for the columnar form of the rocks, which rise in a series of pilasters, with a degree of regularity, which Sir Allan thinks not less worthy of curiosity than the shore of Staffa.

Not long after we came to another range of black rocks, which had the appearance of broken pilasters, set one behind another to a great depth. This place was chosen by Sir Allan for our dinner. We were easily accommodated with seats, for the stones were of all heights, and refreshed ourselves and our boatmen, who could have no other rest till we were at Icolmkill.

The evening was now approaching, and we were yet at a considerable distance from the end of our expedition. We could therefore stop no more to make remarks in the way, but set forward with some degree of eagerness. The day soon failed us, and the moon presented a very solemn and pleasing scene. The sky was clear, so that the eye commanded a wide circle: the sea was neither still nor turbulent; the wind neither silent nor loud. We were never far from one coast or another, on which, if the weather had become violent, we could have found shelter, and therefore contemplated at ease the region through which we glided in the tranquillity of the night, and saw now a rock and now an island grow gradually conspicuous and gradually obscure. I committed the fault which I had just been censuring, in neglecting, as we passed, to note the series of this placid navigation.

We were very near an island, called Nun's Island, perhaps from an ancient convent. Here is said to have been dug the stone which was used in the buildings of Icolmkill. Whether it is now inhabited we could not stay to inquire.

At last we came to

Icolmkill,

but found no convenience for landing. Our boat could not be forced very near the dry ground, and our Highlanders carried us over the water.

We were now treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses; whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and from my friends be such frigid philosophy, as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.

We came too late to visit monuments: some care was necessary for ourselves. Whatever was in the island, Sir Allan could demand, for the

inhabitants were Macleans; but having little, they could not give us much. He went to the head man of the island, whom fame, but fame delights in amplifying, represents as worth no less than fifty pounds. He was perhaps proud enough of his guests, but ill prepared for our entertainment; however, he soon produced more provision than men not luxurious require. Our lodging was next to be provided. We found a barn well stocked with hay, and made our beds as soft as we could.

In the morning we rose and surveyed the place. The churches of the two convents are both standing, though unroofed. They were built of unhewn stone, but solid, and not inelegant. I brought away rude measures of the buildings, such as I cannot much trust myself, inaccurately taken, and obscurely noted. Mr. Pennant's delineations, which are doubtless exact, have made my unskilful description less necessary.

The episcopal church consists of two parts, separated by the belfry, and built at different times. The original church had, like others, the altar at one end, and tower at the other; but as it grew too small, another building of equal dimension was added, and the tower then was necessarily in the middle.

That these edifices are of different ages seems evident. The arch of the first church is Roman,

being part of a circle; that of the additional building is pointed, and therefore Gothic or Saracenical; the tower is firm, and wants only to be floored and covered.

Of the chambers or cells belonging to the monks, there are some walls remaining, but nothing approaching to a complete apartment.

The bottom of the church is so encumbered with mud and rubbish, that we could make no discoveries of curious inscriptions, and what there are have been already published. The place is said to be known where the black stones lie concealed, on which the old Highland chiefs, when they made contracts and alliances, used to take the oath, which was considered as more sacred than any other obligation, and which could not be violated without the blackest infamy. In those days of violence and rapine, it was of great importance to impress upon savage minds the sanctity of an oath, by some particular and extraordinary circumstances. They would not have recourse to the black stones, upon small or common occasions, and when they had established their faith by this tremendous sanction, inconstancy and treachery were no longer feared.

The chapel of the nunnery is now used by the inhabitants as a kind of general cow-house, and the bottom is consequently too miry for examination.

Some of the stones which covered the later abbesses have inscriptions, which might yet be read, if the chapel were cleansed.' The roof of this, as of all the other buildings, is totally destroyed, not only because timber quickly decays when it is neglected, but because in an island utterly destitute of wood, it was wanted for use, and was consequently the first plunder of needy rapacity.

The chancel of the nuns' chapel is covered with an arch of stone, to which time has done no injury; and a small apartment communicating with the choir, on the north side, like the chapter-house in cathedrals, roofed with stone in the same manner, is likewise entire.

In one of the churches was a marble altar, which the superstition of the inhabitants has destroyed. Their opinion was, that a fragment of this stone was a defence against shipwrecks, fire, and miscarriages. In one corner of the church the bason for holy water is yet unbroken.

The cemetery of the nunnery was, till very lately, regarded with such reverence, that only women were buried in it. These reliques of veneration always produce some mournful pleasure. I could have forgiven a great injury more easily than the violation of this imaginary sanctity.

South of the chapel stand the walls of a large room, which was probably the hall, or refectory

of the nunnery. This apartment is capable of repair. Of the rest of the convent there are only fragments.

Besides the two principal churches, there are, I think, five chapels yet standing, and three more remembered. There are also crosses, of which two bear the names of St. John and St. Matthew.

A large space of ground about these consecrated edifices is covered with grave-stones, few of which have any inscription. He that surveys it, attended by an insular antiquary, may be told where the kings of many nations are buried, and if he loves to sooth his imagination with the thoughts that naturally arise in places where the great and the powerful lie mingled with the dust, let him listen in submissive silence; for if he asks any questions, his delight is at an end.

Iona has long enjoyed, without any very credible attestation, the honour of being reputed the cemetery of the Scottish kings. It is not unlikely, that, when the opinion of local sanctity was prevalent, the chieftains of the isles, and perhaps some of the Norwegian or Irish princes, were reposited in this venerable enclosure. But by whom the subterraneous vaults are peopled is now utterly unknown. The graves are very numerous, and some of them undoubtedly contain the remains of men, who did not expect to be so soon forgotten.

Not far from this awful ground may be traced the garden of the monastery: the fishponds are yet discernible, and the aqueduct which supplied them is still in use.

There remains a broken building, which is called the Bishop's House, I know not by what authority. It was once the residence of some man above the common rank, for it has two stories and a chimney. We were shown a chimney at the other end, which was only a niche, without perforation, but so much does antiquarian credulity, or patriotic vanity prevail, that it was not much more safe to trust the eye of our instructor than the memory.

There is in the island one house more, and only one, that has a chimney; we entered it, and found it neither wanting repair nor inhabitants; but to the farmers, who now possess it, the chimney is of no great value; for their fire was made on the floor, in the middle of the room, and notwithstanding the dignity of their mansion, they rejoiced, like their neighbours, in the comforts of smoke.

It is observed, that ecclesiastical colleges are always in the most pleasant and fruitful places. While the world allowed the monks their choice, it is surely no dishonour that they chose well. This island is remarkably fruitful. The village near the

churches is said to contain seventy families, which, at five in a family, is more than a hundred inhabitants to a mile. There are perhaps other villages; yet both corn and cattle are annually exported.

But the fruitfulness of Iona is now its whole prosperity. The inhabitants are remarkably gross, and remarkably neglected: I know not if they are visited by any minister. The island, which was once the metropolis of learning and piety, has now no school for education, nor temple for worship; only two inhabitants that can speak English, and not one that can write or read.

The people are of the clan of Maclean; and though Sir Allan had not been in the place for many years, he was received with all the reverence due to their chieftain. One of them being sharply reprehended by him, for not sending him some rum, declared after his departure, in Mr. Boswell's presence, that he had no design of disappointing him, 'for,' said he, 'I would cut my bones for him; and if he had sent his dog for it, he should have had it.'

When we were to depart, our boat was left by the ebb at a great distance from the water, but no sooner did we wish it afloat, than the islanders gathered round it, and, by the union of many hands, pushed it down the beach; every man who could

contribute his help seemed to think himself happy in the opportunity of being, for a moment, useful to his chief.

We now left those illustrious ruins, by which Mr. Boswell was much affected, nor would I willingly be thought to have looked upon them without some emotion. Perhaps, in the revolutions of the world, Iona may be sometime again the instructress of the western regions.

It was no long voyage to Mull, where under Sir Allan's protection, we landed in the evening, and were entertained for the night by Mr. Maclean, a minister that lives upon the coast, whose elegance of conversation, and strength of judgment, would make him conspicuous in places of greater celebrity. Next day we dined with Dr. Maclean, another physician, and then travelled on to the house of a very powerful laird, Maclean of Lochbuy; for in this country every man's name is Maclean.

Where races are thus numerous, and thus combined, none but the chief of a clan is addressed by his name. The laird of Dunvegan is called Macleod, but other gentlemen of the same family are denominated by the places where they reside, as Raasay or Talisker. The distinction of the meaner people is made by their christian names. In consequence of this practice, the late laird of

Macfarlane, an eminent genealogist, considered himself as disrespectfully treated, if the common addition was applied to him. Mr. Macfarlane, said he, may with equal propriety be said to many; but I, and I only, am Macfarlane.

Our afternoon journey was through a country of such gloomy desolation, that Mr. Boswell thought no part of the Highlands equally terrific, yet we came without any difficulty, at evening, to Lochbuy, where we found a true Highland laird, rough and haughty, and tenacious of his dignity; who, hearing my name, inquired whether I was of the Johnstones of Glencoe, or of Ardnamurchan?

Lochbuy has, like the other insular chieftains, quitted the castle that sheltered his ancestors, and lives near it, in a mansion not very spacious or splendid. I have seen no houses in the islands much to be envied for convenience or magnificence, yet they bear testimony to the progress of arts and civility, as they show that rapine and surprise are no longer dreaded, and are much more commodious than the ancient fortresses.

The castles of the Hebrides, many of which are standing, and many ruined, were always built upon points of land, on the margin of the sea. For the choice of this situation there must have been some general reason, which the change of manners has left in obscurity. They were of no use in the

days of piracy, as defences of the coast; for it was equally accessible in other places. Had they been seamarks or lighthouses, they would have been of more use to the invader than the natives, who could want no such directions on their own waters: for a watchtower, a cottage on a hill would have been better, as it would have commanded a wider view.

If they be considered merely as places of retreat, the situation seems not well chosen; for the laird of an island is safest from foreign enemies in the centre: on the coast he might be more suddenly surprised than in the inland parts; and the invaders, if their enterprise miscarried, might more easily retreat. Some convenience, however, whatever it was, their position on the shore afforded; for uniformity of practice seldom continues long without good reason.

A castle in the islands is only a single tower of three or four stories, of which the walls are sometimes eight or nine feet thick, with narrow windows, and close winding stairs of stone. The top rises in a cone, or pyramid of stone, encompassed by battlements. The intermediate floors are sometimes frames of timber, as in common houses, and sometimes arches of stone, or alternately stone and timber; so that there was very little danger from fire. In the centre of every floor, from top to bot-

tom, is the chief room, of no great extent, round which there are narrow cavities, or recesses formed by small vacuities, or by a double wall. I know not whether there be ever more than one fireplace. They had not capacity to contain many people or much provision; but their enemies could seldom stay to blockade them; for if they failed in their first attack, their next care was to escape.

'The walls were always too strong to be shaken by such desultory hostilities; the windows were too narrow to be entered, and the battlements too high to be scaled. The only danger was at the gates, over which the wall was built with a square cavity, not unlike a chimney, continued to the top. Through this hollow the defendants let fall stones upon those who attempted to break the gate, and poured down water, perhaps scalding water, if the attack was made with fire. The castle of Lochbuy was secured by double doors, of which the outer was an iron grate.

In every castle is a well and a dungeon. The use of the well is evident. The dungeon is a deep subterraneous cavity, walled on the sides, and arched on the top, into which the descent is through a narrow door, by a ladder or a rope, so that it seems impossible to escape, when the rope or ladder is drawn up. The dungeon was, I suppose, in war, a prison for such captives as were

treated with severity; and in peace, for such delinquents as had committed crimes within the laird's jurisdiction; for the mansions of many lairds were, till the late privation of their privileges, the halls of justice to their own tenants.

As these fortifications were the productions of mere necessity, they are built only for safety, with little regard to convenience, and with none to elegance or pleasure. It was sufficient for a laird of the Hebrides, if he had a strong house, in which he could hide his wife and children from the next clan. That they are not large nor splendid is no wonder. It is not easy to find how they were raised, such as they are, by men who had no money, in countries where the labourers and artificers could scarcely be fed. The buildings in different parts of the islands show their degrees of wealth and power. I believe that for all the castles which I have seen beyond the Tweed, the ruins yet remaining of some one of those which the English built in Wales, would supply materials.

These castles afford another evidence that the fictions of romantic chivalry had for their basis the real manners of the feudal times, when every lord of a seignory lived in his hold lawless and unaccountable, with all the licentiousness and insolence of uncontested superiority and unprincipled power.

The traveller, whoever he might be, coming to the fortified habitation of a chieftain, would, probably, have been interrogated from the battlements, admitted with caution at the gate, introduced to a petty monarch, fierce with habitual hostility, and vigilant with ignorant suspicion; who, according to his general temper, or accidental humour, would have seated a stranger as his guest at the table, or as a spy confined him in the dungeon.

Lochbuy means the Yellow Lake, which is the name given to an inlet of the sea, upon which the castle of Mr. Maclean stands. The reason of the appellation we did not learn.

We were now to leave the Hebrides, where we had spent some weeks with sufficient amusement, and where we had amplified our thoughts with new scenes of nature, and new modes of life. More time would have given us a more distinct view, but it was necessary that Mr. Boswell should return before the Courts of Justice were opened; and it was not proper to live too long upon hospitality, however liberally imparted.

Of these islands, it must be confessed, that they have not many allurements, but to the mere lover of naked nature. The inhabitants are thin, provisions are scarce, and desolation and penury give little pleasure.

The people collectively considered are not few,

though their numbers are small in proportion to the space which they occupy. Mull is said to contain six thousand, and Skye fifteen thousand. Of the computation respecting Mull, I can give no account; but when I doubted the truth of the numbers attributed to Skye, one of the ministers exhibited such facts as conquered my incredulity.

Of the proportion which the product of any region bears to the people, an estimate is commonly made according to the pecuniary price of the necessaries of life; a principle of judgment which is never certain, because it supposes, what is far from truth, that the value of money is always the same, and so measures an unknown quantity by an uncertain standard. It is competent enough when the markets of the same country, at different times, and those times not too distant, are to be compared; but of very little use for the purpose of making one nation acquainted with the state of another. Provisions, though plentiful, are sold in places of great pecuniary opulence for nominal prices, to which, however scarce, where gold and silver are yet scarcer, they can never be raised.

In the Western Islands there is so little internal commerce, that hardly any thing has a known or settled rate. The price of things brought in, or carried out, is to be considered as that of a foreign market; and even this there is some difficulty in

discovering, because their denominations of quantity are different from ours; and when there is ignorance on both sides, no appeal can be made to a common measure.

This, however, is not the only impediment. The Scots, with a vigilance of jealousy which never goes to sleep, always suspect that an Englishman despises them for their poverty, and to convince him that they are not less rich than their neighbours, are sure to tell him a price higher than the true. When Lesley, two hundred years ago, related so punctiliously, that a hundred hen eggs. new laid, were sold in the islands for a penny, he supposed that no inference could possibly follow, but that eggs were in great abundance. Posterity has since grown wiser; and having learned, that nominal and real value may differ, they now tell no such stories, lest the foreigner should happen to collect, not that eggs are many, but that pence are few.

Money and wealth have, by the use of commercial language, been so long confounded, that they are commonly supposed to be the same; and this prejudice has spread so widely in Scotland, that I know not whether I found man or woman, whom I interrogated concerning payments of money, that could surmount the illiberal desire of deceiving me, by representing every thing as dearer than it is.

From Lochbuy we rode a very few miles to the side of Mull, which faces Scotland, where, having taken leave of our kind protector, Sir Allan, we embarked in a boat, in which the seat provided for our accommodation was a heap of rough brushwood; and on the twenty-second of October reposed at a tolerable inn on the main land.

On the next day we began our journey southwards. The weather was tempestuous. For half the day the ground was rough, and our horses were still small. Had they required much restraint, we might have been reduced to difficulties; for I think we had amongst us but one bridle. We fed the poor animals liberally, and they performed their journey well. In the latter part of the day we came to a firm and smooth road, made by the soldiers, on which we travelled with great security, busied with contemplating the scene about us. The night came on while we had yet a great part of the way to go, though not so dark but that we could discern the cataracts which poured down the hills on one side, and fell into one general channel that ran with great violence on the other. The wind was loud, the rain was heavy, and the whistling of the blast, the fall of the shower, the rush of the cataracts, and the roar of the torrent, made a nobler chorus of

the rough music of nature than it had ever been my chance to hear before. The streams which ran across the way from the hills to the main current, were so frequent, that after a while I began to count them; and, in ten miles, reckoned fifty-five, probably missing some, and having let some pass before they forced themselves upon my notice. At last we came to

Inveraray,

where we found an inn, not only commodious, but magnificent.

The difficulties of peregrination were now at an end. Mr. Boswell had the honour of being known to the duke of Argyle, by whom we were very kindly entertained at his splendid seat, and supplied with conveniences for surveying his spacious park and rising forests.

After two days stay at Inveraray we proceeded southward over Glencroe, a black and dreary region, now made easily passable by a military road, which rises from either end of the glen by an acclivity not dangerously steep, but sufficiently laborious. In the middle, at the top of the hill, is a seat with this inscription,

REST, AND BE THANKFUL.

Stones were placed to mark the distances, which the inhabitants have taken away, resolved, they said, 'to have no new miles.'

In this rainy season the hills streamed with waterfalls, which, crossing the way, formed currents on the other side, that ran in contrary directions as they fell to the north or south of the summit. Being, by the favour of the duke, well mounted, I went up and down the hill with great convenience.

From Glencroe we passed through a pleasant country to the banks of

Loch Lomond,

and were received at the house of Sir James Colquhoun, who is owner of almost all the thirty islands of the loch, which we went in a boat next morning to survey. The heaviness of the rain shortened our voyage, but we landed on one island planted with yew, and stocked with deer, and on another containing perhaps not more than half an acre, remarkable for the ruins of an old castle, on which the osprey builds her annual nest. Had Loch Lomond been in a happier climate, it would have been the boast of wealth and vanity to own one of the little spots which it encloses, and to have employed upon it all the arts of embellishment.

But as it is, the islets, which court the gazer at a distance, disgust him at his approach, when he finds, instead of soft lawns and shady thickets, nothing more than uncultivated ruggedness.

Where the loch discharges itself into a river called the Leven, we passed a night with Mr. Smollett, a relation of Dr. Smollett, to whose memory he has raised an obelisk on the bank near the house in which he was born. The civility and respect which we found at every place, it is ungrateful to omit, and tedious to repeat. Here we were met by a postchaise, that conveyed us to

Glasgow.

To describe a city so much frequented as Glasgow, is unnecessary. The prosperity of its commerce appears by the greatness of many private houses, and a general appearance of wealth. It is the only episcopal city whose cathedral was left standing in the rage of reformation. It is now divided into many separate places of worship, which, taken altogether, compose a great pile, that had been some centuries in building, but was never finished; for the change of religion intercepted its progress, before the cross isle was added, which seems essential to a Gothic cathedral.

The college has not had a sufficient share of the increasing magnificence of the place. The session was begun; for it commences on the tenth of October, and continues to the tenth of June; but the students appeared not numerous, being, I suppose, not yet returned from their several homes. The division of the academical year into one session, and one recess, seems to me better accommodated to the present state of life, than that variegation of time by terms and vacations, derived from distant centuries, in which it was probably convenient, and still continued in the English universities. So many solid months as the Scotch scheme of education joins together, allow and encourage a plan for each part of the year; but with us, he that has settled himself to study in the college is soon tempted into the country, and he that has adjusted his life in the country, is summoned back to his college.

Yet when I have allowed to the universities of Scotland a more rational distribution of time, I have given them, so far as my inquiries have informed me, all that they can claim. The students, for the most part, go thither boys and depart before they are men; they carry with them little fundamental knowledge, and therefore the superstructure cannot be lofty. The grammar-schools are not generally well supplied; for the

character of a schoolmaster being there less honourable than in England, is seldom accepted by men who are capable to adorn it, and where the school has been deficient, the college can effect little.

Men bred in the universities of Scotland cannot be expected to be often decorated with the splendours of ornamental erudition, but they obtain a mediocrity of knowledge between learning and ignorance, not inadequate to the purposes of common life, which is, I believe, very widely diffused among them, and which, countenanced in general by a national combination so invidious, that their friends cannot defend it, and actuated in particulars by a spirit of enterprise, so vigorous, that their enemies are constrained to praise it, enables them to find, or to make their way to employment, riches, and distinction.

'From Glasgow we directed our course to Auchinleck, an estate devolved, through a long series of ancestors, to Mr. Boswell's father, the present possessor. In our way we found several places remarkable enough in themselves, but already described by those who viewed them at more leisure, or with much more skill; and stopped two days at Mr. *Campbell's, a gentleman married to Mr. Boswell's sister.

Auchinleck,

which signifies a stony field, seems not now to have any particular claim to its denomination. It is a district generally level, and sufficiently fertile, but, like all the western side of Scotland, incommoded by very frequent rain. It was, with the rest of the country, generally naked, till the present possessor finding, by the growth of some stately trees near his old castle, that the ground was favourable enough to timber, adorned it very diligently with annual plantations.

Lord Auchinleck, who is one of the judges of Scotland, and therefore not wholly at leisure for domestic business or pleasure, has yet found time to make improvements in his patrimony. He has built a house of hewn stone, very stately and durable, and has advanced the value of his lands with great tenderness to his tenants.

I was, however, less delighted with the elegance of the modern mansion, than with the sullen dignity of the old castle. I clambered with Mr. Boswell among the ruins, which afford striking images of ancient life. It is, like other castles, built upon a point of rock, and was, I believe, anciently surrounded with a moat. There is another rock near it, to which the drawbridge, when

it was let down, is said to have reached. Here, in the ages of tumult and rapine, the laird was surprised and killed by the neighbouring chief, who perhaps might have extinguished the family, had he not in a few days been seized and hanged, together with his sons, by Douglas, who came with his forces to the relief of Auchinleck.

At no great distance from the house runs a pleasing brook, by a red rock, out of which has been hewn a very agreeable and commodious summer-house, at less expense, as Lord Auchinleck told me, than would have been required to build a room of the same dimensions. The rock seems to have no more dampness than any other wall. Such opportunities of variety it is judicious not to neglect.

We now returned to Edinburgh, where I passed some days with men of learning, whose names want no advancement from my commemoration, or with women of elegance, which perhaps disclaims a pedant's praise.

The conversation of the Scots grows every day less unpleasing to the English; their peculiarities wear fast away; their dialect is likely to become in half a century provincial and rustic, even to themselves. The great, the learned, the ambitious, and the vain, all cultivate the English phrase, and the English pronunciation, and in

splendid companies Scotch is not much heard, except now and then from an old lady.

There is one subject of philosophical curiosity to be found in Edinburgh, which no other city has to show; a College of the Deaf and Dumb, who are taught to speak, to read, to write, and to practise arithmetic, by a gentleman, whose name is Braidwood. The number which attends him is, I think, about twelve, which he brings together into a little school, and instructs according to their several degrees of proficiency.

I do not mean to mention the instruction of the deaf as new. Having been first practised upon the son of a constable of Spain, it was afterwards cultivated with much emulation in England, by Wallis and Holder, and was lately professed by Mr. Baker, who once flattered me with hopes of seeing his method published. How far any former teachers have succeeded, it is not easy to know; the improvement of Mr. Braidwood's pupils is wonderful. They not only speak, write, and understand what is written, but if he that speaks looks towards them, and modifies his organs by distinct and full utterance, they know so well what is spoken, that it is an expression scarcely figurative to say they hear with the eye. That any have attained to the power mentioned by Burnet, of feeling sounds, by laying a hand

on the speaker's mouth, I know not; but I have seen so much, that I can believe more; a single word, or a short sentence, I think, may possibly be so distinguished.

It will readily be supposed by those that consider this subject, that Mr. Braidwood's scholars spell accurately. Orthography is vitiated among such as learn first to speak, and then to write, by imperfect notions of the relation between letters and vocal utterance; but to those students every character is of equal importance; for letters, are to them not symbols of names, but of things; when they write they do not represent a sound, but delineate a form.

This school I visited, and found some of the scholars waiting for their master, whom they are said to receive at his entrance with smiling countenances and sparkling eyes, delighted with the hope of new ideas. One of the young ladies had her slate before her, on which I wrote a question consisting of three figures, to be multiplied by two figures. She looked upon it, and quivering her fingers in a manner which I thought very pretty, but of which I knew not whether it was art or play, multiplied the sum regularly in two lines, observing the decimal place; but did not add the two lines together, probably disdaining so easy an operation. I pointed at the place where the

sum total should stand, and she noted it with such expedition as seemed to show that she had it only to write.

It was pleasing to see one of the most desperate of human calamities capable of so much help: whatever enlarges hope, will exalt courage; after having seen the deaf taught arithmetic, who would be afraid to cultivate the Hebrides?

Such are the things which this journey has given me an opportunity of seeing, and such are the reflections which that sight has raised. Having passed my time almost wholly in cities, I may have been surprised by modes of life and appearances of nature, that are familiar to men of wider survey and more varied conversation. Novelty and ignorance must always be reciprocal, and I cannot but be conscious that my thoughts on national manners, are the thoughts of one who has seen but little.

END OF THE JOURNEY.

REMARKS

ON

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON'S

Journey to the Hebrides;

WITH OBSERVATIONS ON THE

Antiquities, Language, Genius, and Manners.

OF THE

HIGHLANDERS OF SCOTLAND.

BY THE REV. DONALD M'NICOL, A.M.

MINISTER OF LISMORE, ARGYLESHIRE.

OLD MEN AND TRAVELLERS *LIE* BY AUTHORITY.—*Ray's Proverbs*

FIRST PUBLISHED IN 1779

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following sheets were written soon after Dr. Johnson's 'Journey to the Hebrides' was printed. But as the writer had never made his appearance at the bar of the Public, he was unwilling to enter the lists, with such a *powerful* antagonist, without previously consulting a few learned friends. The distance of those friends made it difficult to procure their opinion, without some trouble and a great loss of time: besides, the Author was not so fond of his work as to be very anxious about its publication.

He is, however, sensible, that the publication, if it was at all to happen, has been too long delayed. Answers to eminent writers

are generally indebted, for their sale and circulation, to the works which they endeavour to refute. Unfortunately, Dr. Johnson's 'Journey' has lain dead in the library for some time past. This consideration is so discouraging, that the writer of the Remarks expects little literary reputation, and less profit, from his labours. But, as he had gone so far, he was induced to go farther still, were it for nothing more than the ambition of sending his work to *sleep*, on the same shelf, with that of the learned Dr. Johnson.

REMARKS

ON

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON'S JOURNEY

TO THE

HEBRIDES.

TRAVELLING through the different kingdoms of Europe has greatly prevailed, of late years, among men of curiosity and taste. Some are led abroad by the mere love of novelty; others have a more solid purpose in view, a desire of acquiring an extensive knowledge of mankind. As the observations of the former are generally of a cursory nature, and seldom extend beyond the circle of their private acquaintance, it is from the latter only that we can expect a more public and particular information relative to foreign parts. Some ingenious and valuable productions of this kind have lately made their appearance; and when a man communicates, with candour and fidelity,

what he has seen in other countries, he cannot render a more agreeable or useful service to his own.

By such faithful portraits of men and manners, we are presented with a view of the world around us, as it really is. Our author, like a trusty guide, conducts us through the scenes he describes, and makes us acquainted with the inhabitants; and thus we reap all the pleasures and advantages of travel, without the inconveniences attending it. There is no country so contemptible as not to furnish some things that may please, nor is any arrived to that degree of perfection as to afford no matter of dislike. When, therefore, no false colouring is used, to diminish what is commendable, or magnify defects, we often find reason to give up much of our supposed superiority over other nations. Hence our candour increases with our knowledge of mankind, and we get rid of the folly of prejudice and self-conceit; which is equally ridiculous in a people as individuals, and equally an obstacle to improvement.

It were to be wished that the Treatise, which is the subject of the following sheets, had been formed on such a plan as has been now mentioned, as it would be a much more agreeable task to commend than censure it. But it will appear, from the sequel, how far its author has acquitted himself

with that candour which could inform the curious, or undeceive the prejudiced.

When it was known, some years ago, that Dr. Samuel Johnson, a man of some reputation for letters, had undertaken a tour through Scotland, it was naturally enough expected, that one of his contemplative turn would, some time or other, give a public account of his journey. His early prejudices against the country were sufficiently known; but every one expected a fair, if not a flattering, representation, from the narrative of grey hairs. But there was another circumstance which promised a collateral security for the Doctor's fair dealing. Mr. Pennant, and other gentlemen of abilities and integrity, had made the same tour before him, and, like men of liberal sentiments, spoke respectfully of the Scotch nation. It was thought, therefore, that this, if nothing else, would prove a check to his prepossessions, and make him extremely cautious, were it only for his own sake, how he contradicted such respectable authorities.

Neither of these considerations, however, had any weight. The Doctor hated Scotland; that was the master-passion, and it scorned all restraints. He seems to have set out with a design to give a distorted representation of every thing he saw on the north side of the Tweed; and it is but doing

him justice to acknowledge, that he has not failed in the execution.

But consistency has not always been attended to in the course of his narration. He differs no more from other travellers, than he often does from himself, denying at one time what he has asserted at another, as prejudice, or a more generous passion, happened, by turns, to prevail; which, to say no worse, is but an awkward situation for a man who makes any pretensions to be believed.

At the same time I am not so partial to my country, as to say that Dr. Johnson is always in the wrong when he finds fault. On the contrary. I am ready to allow him, as, I believe, will every Scotchman, that the road through the mountains, from Fort Augustus to Glenelg, is not quite so smooth as that between London and Bath; and that he could not find, in the huts or cottages at Anoch and Glensheals, the same luxuries and accommodations as in the inns on an English post-road. In these, and such like remarks, the Doctor's veracity must certainly remain unimpeached. But the bare merit of telling truth will not always atone for a want of candour in the intention. In the more remote and unfrequented parts of a country, little refinement is to be expected; it is, therefore, no less frivolous to examine them with too critical an eye, than disingenuous to exhibit

them as specimens of the rest. This, however, has been too much the practice with Dr. Johnson, in his account of Scotland; every trifling defect is eagerly brought forward, while the more perfect parts of the piece are as carefully kept out of view. If other travellers were to proceed on the same plan, what nation in Europe but might be made to appear ridiculous?

The objects of any moment, which have been chiefly distinguished by that odium which Dr. Johnson bears to every thing that is Scotch, seem to be, the Poems of Ossian; the whole Gaelic language; our seminaries of learning; the Reformation; and the veracity of all Scotch, and particularly Highland narration. The utter extinction of the two former seems to have been the principal motive of his journey to the North. To pave the way for this favourite purpose, and being aware that the influence of tradition, to which all ages and nations have ever paid some regard in matters of remote antiquity, must be removed, he resolves, point blank, to deny the validity of all Scotch, and particularly Highland narration. This he employs all his art to persuade the public is always vague and fabulous, and deserves no manner of credit, except when it proves unfavourable to the country; then, indeed, it is deemed altogether infallible.

and is adduced, by himself, upon all occasions, in proof of what he asserts. But this is a mode of reasoning with which the world has been totally unacquainted before the Doctor's days.

The poems of Ossian were no sooner made known to the public, though stripped of their native ancient garb, than they became the delight and admiration of the learned over all Europe. Dr. Johnson, perhaps, was the only man, of any pretensions to be ranked in that class, who chose to dissent from the general voice. The moment he heard of the publication and fame of those poems, he declared them spurious, without waiting for the common formality of a perusal. His cynical disposition instantly took the alarm; and that, aided by his prejudices, would not suffer him to admit that a composition of such acknowledged merit could originate from a country which, because he hated, he always affected to despise.

But what is the consequence of this hasty and absurd declaration? After all that has been said upon the subject, the poems must still be considered as the production either of Ossian or Mr. Macpherson. Dr. Johnson does not vouchsafe to tell us who else was the author; and consequently the national claim remains perfectly entire. In labouring to deny their antiquity, therefore, the Doctor only

plucks the wreath of ages from the tomb of the ancient bard, to adorn the brow of the modern Caledonian. For the moment Mr. Macpherson ceases to be admitted as a translator, he instantly acquires a title to the original. This consequence is unavoidable, though it is not to be supposed Dr. Johnson intended it. Naturally pompous and vain, and ridiculously ambitious of an exclusive reputation in letters, it can hardly be believed that he would voluntarily bestow so envied a compliment on a young candidate for fame, who had already, in other respects, made a discovery of talents sufficient to alarm his own pride: but we often derive from the folly of some men, more than we claim from their justice.

From the first appearance of Ossian's poems in public, we may date the origin of Dr. Johnson's intended tour to Scotland; whatever he may pretend to tell us, in the beginning of his narration. There are many circumstances to justify this opinion; among which a material one is, that a gentleman of undoubted honour and veracity, who happened to be at London soon after that period, informed me upon his return to the country, that Caledonia might, some day, look for an unfriendly visit from the Doctor. So little able was he, it seems, to conceal his ill-humour on that occasion, that it became the subject of common discourse;

and the event has fully verified what was predicted as the consequence.

In the year 1773 he accomplished his purpose; and sometime in the year following he published an account of his journey, which plainly shows the spirit with which it was undertaken. All men have their prejudices more or less, nor are the best always without them; but so sturdy an instance as this is hardly to be met with. It is without example, in any attempt of the like kind that has gone before it; and it is to be hoped, for the sake of truth and the credit of human nature, it will furnish none to such as may come after.

As, in refuting the misrepresentations, and detecting the inconsistencies of Dr. Johnson, it may sometimes be found necessary to draw a comparison between the north and the south side of the Tweed, it is proper to premise here, that this shall always be done, without the least intention to reflect on the English nation. My mind was perfectly free from the narrowness of national prejudice before this occasion, and I am not yet sufficiently provoked, by the Doctor's injustice to my country, to retaliate against his. To illustrate the subject by similar instances, is my only aim; as men, like objects brought nearer to the eye, observations, when applied more immediately to ourselves, will strike more forcibly. This much,

I hope, will suffice as an apology with every candid Englishman. And as to some people among ourselves, who easily give up many points of national honour, they are chiefly upstarts in the world; a set of men, who, in all countries, are apt to make light of distinctions from which their own obscurity excludes them.

My first intention was to write what I had to say on this subject in the form of an Essay. Upon farther consideration, however, the method I have now adopted appeared the most eligible; as, by citing the Doctor's own words, the public will be the better enabled to judge what justice is done to his meaning. This plan, on account of the frequent interruptions, may not, perhaps, render the performance so entertaining to some readers; but it gives an opportunity for a more close investigation, and to such as are not possessed of the Doctor's book, it will, in a great measure, supply its place.

That the reader may not be disappointed, I must tell him beforehand, that he is not to expect, in the following sheets, what Dr. Johnson calls 'ornamental splendours.' Impartiality of observation shall be more attended to than elegance of diction; and if I appear sometimes severe, the Doctor shall have no reason to say I am unjust. He is to be tried all along by his own evidence;

and, therefore, he cannot complain, if, 'out of his own mouth, he is condemned.'

Dr. Johnson informs us, that he set out from Edinburgh, upon his intended peregrination, the 18th of August, 1773. This must undoubtedly appear an uncommon season of the year for an old frail inhabitant of London to undertake a journey to the Hebrides, if he proposed the tour should prove agreeable to himself, or amusing to the public. Most other travellers make choice of the summer months, when the countries through which they pass are seen to most advantage; and as the Doctor acknowledges he had been hitherto but little out of the metropolis, one should think he would have wished to have made the most of his journey. But it was not beauties the Doctor went to find out in Scotland, but defects; and for the northern situation of the Hebrides, the advanced time of the year suited his purpose best.

He passes over the city of Edinburgh almost without notice; though surely its magnificent castle, its palace, and many stately buildings, both public and private, were not unworthy of a slight touch, at least, from the Doctor's pencil. Little, therefore, is to be expected from a man who would turn his back on the capital with a supercilious silence. But, indeed, he is commonly very sparing of his remarks where there is

any thing that merits attention; though we find he has always enough to say where none but himself could find matter of observation.

In page 2, his account of the island of Inch Keith is trifling and contradictory. He represents it as a barren rock where there formerly was a fort; and yet he tells us again, that it was never intended for a place of strength, and that a 'herd of cows grazes annually upon it in the summer.' But a fort without strength is surely something new, and grazing for cattle a most uncommon mark of barrenness.

Before the Doctor dismisses this wonderful spot,—which he has made something and nothing all in a breath,—he amuses himself with thinking 'on the different appearance that it would have made, if it had been placed at the same distance from London;' and then he adds, with an air of exultation, 'with what emulation of price a few rocky acres would have been purchased, and with what expensive industry they would have been cultivated and adorned.'

The censure implied in the above passage is obvious; but, to give it effect, the Doctor ought first to determine whether Inch Keith is not still a royal property. Should that be found to be the case, no 'emulation of price' could purchase it; and consequently the citizens of Edinburgh are

not to be blamed for not cultivating and adorning what they cannot make their own.

But this consideration set apart, let me ask the Doctor, Whether the Londoners have shown themselves so very deserving of the ranting compliment he pays them? If I am not misinformed, there are, at this present moment, even in the very heart of the cities of London and Westminster, many extensive spots of ground, which exhibit at once the most miserable marks of desolation, and proofs of neglect. Instead of being cultivated and adorned, these are represented as dangerous to the passenger, and loathsome to the view. What then are we to think of this boasted emulation to purchase, this industry to improve? Is it very credible, that a people should go such expensive lengths for an agreeable situation without their walls, who permit the vilest sinks of filth and corruption to incommode and disgrace their streets?

The Doctor says, he discovered no woods in his way towards Cupar. This may be true, as the Doctor's optics, I am told, are none of the best. But surely the fine extensive plantations of the Earl of Leven's estate, and not very distant from the public road, could not well have escaped the notice of any other passenger. He then tells us, 'that a tree is as great a curiosity in Scotland, as a horse at Venice.'—I cannot decide upon the

merits of this assertion, as I am not acquainted with the numbers of the Venetian cavalry. But, whatever the Doctor may insinuate about the present scarcity of trees in Scotland, we are much deceived by fame, if a very near ancestor of his, who was a native of that country, did not find to his cost, that a tree was not quite such a rarity in his days.

It is allowed, indeed, he might pass through some parts of Scotland, where there are not many trees; as, I believe, is the case in England, and most other countries. But as he is so very careful in describing the nakedness of the country where trees were not, he ought to have had the candour likewise to inform us where they were.

Such, however, as are desirous of satisfaction on this head, may consult Mr. Pennant's Tour, and they will find a very different account of the matter from that given by the Doctor. That gentleman found abundance of woods, and even trees, in different parts of the country, if those of twelve and fifteen feet in circumference may deserve that name. But he travelled with his judgment unbiassed, and his eyes open; two circumstances in which he differed very materially from Dr. Johnson, and which, rather somewhat unluckily for the latter, has occasioned such a frequent difference in their accounts.

As the Doctor arrived at St. Andrew's at two

in the morning, it is pleasant enough to hear him say, 'Though we were yet in the most populous part of Scotland, and at so small a distance from the capital, we met few passengers.'—Few people, I believe, would complain of this circumstance, at the same hours, and at so small a distance from the English capital. But it is pretty evident, that the Doctor meant nothing less than a compliment to the Scots, for the security with which he performed this nocturnal expedition.

But the night is the usual season for rest; and that being considered, it effectually takes the sting from the above silly remark. What man in his senses would expect to find crowded roads at midnight? Or what man of common honesty would be bold enough to assert, that there were few or no trees in Fife, because forsooth they were not to be seen in the dark?

He says, page 5, that there is hardly so much of the cathedral of St. Andrew's remaining as to 'exhibit, even to an artist, a sufficient specimen of the architecture.' I am at a loss to know what he means by a 'sufficient specimen,' if a great part of one of the side walls, with a spire at each end, and the main entry entire, are not sufficient for the purpose he mentions: for all these still remain in spite of 'Knox's reformation,' as he sarcastically expresses it.

In 1543, a bill was passed in the parliament of Scotland, granting leave to the people to read the Scriptures in the vulgar tongues; and this bill was notified to the public, by a proclamation from the regent. He even went so far as to desire Sir Ralph Sadler, the English ambassador, to send for English bibles from London. As this deed, therefore, had the sanction of the regent and parliament, let the world judge of the candour of the man who calls it 'Knox's reformation.'

Page 5. He mentions the miserable but just fate of cardinal Beatoun, in such a manner as might make it be thought to have proceeded from the religious animosities of those times; for he says, that 'he was murdered by the ruffians of reformation.' But it is well known to such as are conversant in the history of that period, that it was not for his religion that this pest of society was brought to an untimely end. His numberless cruelties and oppressions had raised him many enemies among all ranks of people; and in particular there was an old quarrel between him and Norman Lesly, son to the Earl of Rothes, who was the principal agent in ridding the world of a monster, who ought rather to have fallen by the hand of public justice.

But while our author condemns this act with so much malignant acrimony, he takes care, with

his usual candour, to conceal from his reader the more to be lamented fate of the amiable Wishart; who but a few days before, and that for conscience' sake alone, was condemned to the flames, and suffered accordingly, by one of the many barbarous decrees of the Doctor's favourite cardinal, though there was an express order from the regent to the contrary. If this was not murder with a vengeance, I should be glad to know its proper name. But as it was perpetrated under the sanction of a popish judicatory, the Doctor may, perhaps, soften persecution into justice, and roundly affirm that the devoted Wishart deserved no mercy, for the unpardonable crime, according to him, of being one of the 'ruffians of reformation.' He seems, indeed, to have a good deal of the old leaven in his composition; and whatever may be his notions of civil liberty, he shows himself, upon most occasions, to be no great friend to that of conscience.

In page 6, he asserts, that all the civilization introduced into Scotland, is entirely owing to our trade and intercourse with England. It is but too common with English writers to speak contemptuously of other countries, and arrogate very largely to their own; and what with national vanity on the one hand, and national prejudice on the other, the Doctor has, in this instance.

either suffered himself to be betrayed into a most gross and wilful misrepresentation, or he discovers an amazing ignorance of the history of Europe. This miracle of knowledge did not know, or is willing to forget, that, long before the period he alludes to, we had an intercourse of many centuries with France; a nation as polite, at least, as England; and, perhaps, full as ready to do justice to the characters of their neighbours.

Our first league with France was in the reign of Charlemagne, in 790, signed by that monarch, and afterwards by our king Achaius, at Inverlochy. Charles the Great was so fond of ennobling France, not only by arms but by arts, that he sent for learned men from Scotland, says Buchanan, to read philosophy, in Greek and Latin, at Paris. He himself had for his preceptor, Johannes Scotus, or Albinus, a man eminent for learning.

Many other Scots went over about that time, to instruct the inhabitants about the Rhine in the doctrines of Christianity; which they did with such success, that the people built monasteries in many places. The Germans paid such a respect to their memories, that, even in Buchanan's time, Scotchmen were made governors of those monasteries.

From the time of Achaius to the Union, our

alliance with France continued. A complete catalogue of all those treaties, with an English translation, was published in 1751; to which I refer the Doctor, to convince him, that we had some importance as a nation, before we had any connexion with his country. There he will see the uncommon privileges we enjoyed in France; that we were entrusted with the highest offices, civil, military, and ecclesiastical; that we were complimented with all the rights and franchises of native subjects, which we possess to this day; and that we were distinguished by the singular honour of acting as lifeguards to the French kings; a trust, one would think, not to be conferred on such savages and barbarians as the Doctor would make us.

Our merchants likewise enjoyed the most uncommon privileges and immunities in France; and many of our nobility and gentlemen obtained extensive estates in that kingdom, as rewards for their signal services to the state, which the posterity of most of them inherit to this day.

There cannot, I think, be a more convincing proof of the entire confidence which the French reposed in the honour and fidelity of the Scots, than their making choice of them for guarding the persons of their sovereigns. After Lewis the Twelfth had set forth, in terms the most honour-

able to our nation, the services which the Scots had performed for Charles the Seventh, in expelling the English out of France, and reducing the kingdom to his obedience, he adds,—“ Since which reduction, and for the service the Scots rendered to Charles the Seventh, upon that occasion, and for the great loyalty and virtue which he found in them, he selected two hundred of them for the guard of his person, of whom he made a hundred men at arms, and a hundred lifeguards: and the hundred men at arms are the hundred lances of our ancient ordinances; and the lifeguard men are those of our guard, who still are near and about our person.”

With respect to the fidelity of the Scots in this honourable station, let us hear the testimony of Claud Seysil, Master of Requests to the same Lewis the Twelfth, and afterwards Archbishop of Turin, in the history of that prince; where, speaking of Scotland, he says,—“ The French have so ancient a friendship and alliance with the Scots, that, of four hundred men appointed for the king's lifeguard, there are a hundred of the said nation who are the nearest to his person, and, in the night, keep the keys of the apartment where he sleeps. There are, moreover, a hundred complete lances, and two hundred yeomen of the said nation, besides several that are dispersed through the com-

panies: and for so long a time as they have served in France, never hath there been one of them found, that hath committed, or done any fault, against the kings or their state; and they make use of them as of their own subjects."

The ancient rights and privileges of the Scottish lifeguards are very honourable. Here follows a description of the functions and precedence belonging to their company, and especially to the twenty-four first guards; to whom the first *gens-d'armes* of France being added, they make up the number of twenty-five, commonly called *gardes de manche,* (sleeve guards,) who were all Scotch by nation. The author of the ancient alliance says,—"Two of them assist at mass, sermon, vespers, and ordinary meals. On high holidays, at the ceremony of the royal touch, the erection of Knights of the King's Order, the reception of extraordinary ambassadors, and the public entries of cities, there must be six of their number next to the king's person, three on each side of his majesty: and the body of the king must be carried by these only, wheresoever ceremony requires; and his effigy must be attended by them. They have the keeping of the keys of the king's lodging at night, the keeping of the choir of the chapel, the keeping of the boats when the king passes the rivers; and they have the honour of bearing

the white silk fringe in their arms, which, in France, is the coronal colour. The keys of all the cities where the king makes his entry are given to their captain, in waiting, or out of waiting. He has the privilege, in waiting, or out of waiting, at ceremonies, such as coronations, marriages, and funerals of the kings, and at the baptisms and marriages of their children, to take duty upon him. The coronation robe belongs to him: and this company, by the death or change of a captain, never changes its rank, as do the three others."

It would be easy to produce the most honourable testimonies of our national character, from the writers of all the states of any note in Europe, our nearest neighbours excepted. But this much may suffice to convince the most partial and credulous of Doctor Johnson's readers, that, when we began to have 'trade and intercourse with England,' our manners could not stand in much need of any cultivation from that quarter. It will be allowed, I believe, that the English, like most other nations, are indebted for their own chief improvements to the French. It would, therefore, be ridiculous to suppose, that we, who had access to the original so long before themselves, should have occasion, at last, to borrow from the

copy, and thus to acquire the little polish he allows us, at second-hand only.

Page 7. When speaking of the university of St. Andrew's, the Doctor says, 'that the universities in Scotland are mouldering into dust.' This remark is the more extraordinary, as a great part of St. Salvator's college was built from the foundation not above twenty years ago. It can hardly be believed, therefore, that such a visible tendency to decay could already have taken place, though, instead of solid stone, the building had been constructed of such brittle materials as English bricks.

He next complains, with more virulence than justice, of the neglected state of the chapel of St. Leonard's college. But as that college has been, with great propriety, dissolved, a strict attention to its chapel, which is no longer wanted for religious purposes, does not appear necessary. The chapel of St. Salvator's, however, which, within these few years, has been very neatly repaired, and that at a considerable expense, has entirely escaped the Doctor's notice. Not a word of this; otherwise, as it now supplies the place of the other, the dilapidation would have been accounted for, and this heinous charge of sacrilege shown to be unjust. To be consistent, therefore, it was necessary to be silent. And the Doctor's tender regard

to decorum, in this instance, illustrates a beautiful observation of his own, in the page I have last quoted, when he says, 'Where there is yet shame, there may in time be virtue.'

The library of St. Andrew's is the next object of his remarks, which, he tells us, 'is not very spacious.' This, however, is a vague and indefinite way of speaking, to which the Doctor is rather too frequently addicted. General terms convey no distinct ideas; and, if he wished to be understood, he should have given the several dimensions, that the public might judge for themselves. For my own part, I am at a loss to know what he means by 'very spacious.' It is not, indeed, so spacious as St. Paul's; but it is sufficiently large and elegant, as a repository of books, for any literary society in the kingdom.

He informs us, that the gentleman by whom it was shown, hoped to mortify his English vanity, by telling him, that they had no such library in England. This observation, I confess, was needless; and, perhaps, unjust. But, be that as it may, the Doctor seems determined to have his revenge, by saying something to disparage it.

Nothing can be more uncandid and erroneous, than the account he gives of the rates at which the different classes of students may pass their

session, or term, at St. Andrew's. His calculation, in general, falls short of the necessary expenses, by more than one half. Formerly, perhaps, the sums he mentions might have been nearly sufficient; but it is well known, that, of late years, the expense of an academical education in Scotland, as is probably the case in England too, has increased very considerably.

When a man attempts to inform the public in any thing, he should take some care to be first well informed himself. But our traveller, on most occasions, seems not to be very nice in that respect. Minute inquiries might either be troublesome, or not suit his purpose; and, therefore, to cut the matter short, and come easily at his point, he often makes a confident assertion stand for authority.

The Doctor, at length, takes leave of St. Andrew's; though not, to do him justice, without making decent mention of the kindness of the professors. But even that, he says, 'did not contribute to abate the uneasy remembrance of a university declining, a college alienated, and a church profaned and hastening to the ground.' From these circumstances he is led into a train of reveries, which he concludes in these pathetic words: 'Had the university been destroyed two centuries ago, we should not have regretted it;

but to see it pining in decay and struggling for life, fills the mind with mournful images and ineffectual wishes.'

This is certainly fine language; and a proof, no doubt, of fine feelings. I heartily sympathize with his generous distress, especially as there is no remedy but ineffectual wishes! But I must tell the good man, for his comfort, that the matter is not quite so bad as his too lively imagination represents it; and that the 'mournful images' which fill his mind, are the mere vagaries of a distempered fancy. His readers, therefore, need not be too deeply impressed with the calamities he speaks of; as it is not the first time, I am told, that the Doctor has amused the public with a False Alarm.

But to follow our traveller a little more closely on this subject. What he calls 'a university declining,' must certainly refer to the college of St. Leonard; for I have mentioned a little above, that the college of St. Salvator had undergone a thorough repair within these last twenty years. As this, then, is what ought, in propriety, to be now called the university, the other being dissolved; and as he acknowledges the abilities of the professors; the most partial, I think, must see the folly, as well as the falsehood of this assertion. But had those walls, which he describes as 'pining in decay,' and the other universities in Scotland, of which he

gives not a much better account, produced as few eminent men, as some other universities that might be named, the Doctor's antipathy to this country had not, perhaps, been so great; nor would he, probably, have taken the trouble of examining our seminaries of learning upon the spot.

As to his 'alienated college,' he saves me the trouble of saying much on that head, by confessing, page 7, that 'the dissolution of St. Leonard's college was doubtless necessary.' If this be so, why complain of the measure? To be necessary and yet a reproach, seems rather somewhat incompatible, and presents us with a combination of terms, for which, perhaps, we can find no synonymous authority, unless in the Doctor's Dictionary.

We come now, along with the Doctor, to the melancholy task of viewing 'a church profaned and hastening to the ground.' This church is no other than the old chapel of the annexed, not the alienated, college of St. Leonard. Its having been formerly consecrated by the Romish rites, may give some little fillip to the Doctor's zeal; but in what manner it has been profaned of late years, unless he means by the Presbyterian religion, I am unable to conjecture. Since the dissolution of the seminary to which it belonged, it has ceased to be occupied as a place of worship. I see no profanation, therefore, in applying it to any other

useful purpose; as no degree of sanctity can surely remain in the walls. The Scots, at least, do not carry their veneration for such relics so far as the Doctor did in the island of Iona, as we shall see in its proper place; a circumstance which is no bad index to his religious creed.

Page 11. He represents 'the whole country as extending in uniform nakedness, except that in the road between Kirkcaldy and Cupar,' he 'passed for a few yards between two hedges.' Here I could venture to lay a hundred to one, that our doughty traveller mistook two extensive parks for two small hedges; from whence we may form an idea of the unconscionable length of the Doctor's yard. This notable gentleman came to Scotland without eyes to see the objects that lay in his way; and therefore to follow him through the account he gives of his journey with too much confidence, would be literally trusting to a *blind* guide.

He passes very rapidly through the town of Dundee, for fear, I suppose, of being obliged to take notice of its increasing trade. Besides a variety of other extensive and profitable manufactures, the dying of linen yarn is brought to a greater degree of perfection in that place, than any where else in Great Britain. As this is a very curious art, and employs some thousands of people, one

silent modesty of a Scotch beggar to escape the lash, it is enough to show that he is determined not to be pleased.

I intended to have made a remark on what I thought an impropriety in our traveller's language, when he says that 'the hedges near Montrose are of stone.' But I shall leave the thorn of correction for the abler hand of Lexiphanes; a name which the Doctor may long remember, for a former complete trimming of his Vocabulary.

In his way from Montrose, he observes; that 'the fields are so generally ploughed, that it is hard to imagine where grass is found for the horses that till them.' Alas! what shall poor Scotland do to please the good Doctor? In one place he finds too little tillage, in another too much. Not long ago, he told us, 'that the whole country was extended in uniform nakedness;' but here he seems to forget himself, and says, 'the harvest, which was almost ripe, appeared very plentiful.' A country covered with a plentiful crop, cannot certainly be called naked. But let the reader account for such caprices, and reconcile such contradictions, if he can.

He insinuates, page 16, that there are no robbers in Scotland. But, as he seldom bestows with the one hand, without taking away with the other, he concludes his observation by adding, 'for where there are so few travellers, why should there be

robbers?' If he means any thing by this, it must be, that the poverty with which he every where brands the Scotch nation, makes the poorer sort honest. This is one good consequence from a misfortune at least; but the conclusion will by no means follow. Riches and poverty are relative all the world over; and consequently, where there is but little wealth, the wants of the most indigent, will be as effectually relieved by depredations on their neighbours, as in more opulent countries. In spite of the Doctor's sophistry, therefore, a pretended want of inducements to rapine, fails to account here for the want of the practice. The safety with which, as he confesses, he pursued his journey, both by night and by day, called for a more generous interpretation. It is principle alone, and neither the penury or paucity of its inhabitants, that exempts the traveller in Scotland from the terrors of the pistol and dagger.

This communicative gentleman, among other curious anecdotes, informs us, that he seldom found in Scotland any method of keeping their windows open, when there was occasion for admitting fresh air, but by holding them up with the hand, unless now and then among good contrivers, there be a nail which one might stick into a hole to keep them from falling. The misfortune is, whatever the Doctor meets with but once, if it suits his

purpose, he will make universal. That he might meet with some instances of what he mentions, I will not dispute; nor in remote corners, nor even elsewhere when the pullies may happen to be out of order, do I think it a bad shift; and if our neighbours of the South have not a nail, or some such expedient, in the like circumstances, they are not what he calls good contrivers.

For once, however, he seems to feel a conscious blush for the futility of his censures; and we find him have the good grace to offer an apology for abasing himself so far, as to mention such trifles as nails to support windows, by alleging, 'that the great outlines or characteristics of a nation are to be marked out not in palaces, or among the learned, but among the bulk of the people.' This is certainly a just observation, in which I heartily agree with him; and had he begun to mark out these outlines or characteristics a little nearer home, he might, perhaps, have found fewer novelties on this side of the Tweed.

Page 31. He observes, 'a Scotch army was very cheaply kept' after the time of the Reformation. I know not, indeed, how cheap those armies might have been to their friends; but the history of England can vouch that they often proved very dear to their enemies. To be particular on this head would be invidious; nor shall the Doctor's

malevolence provoke me to draw aside the veil which a happy union between the two kingdoms has long since, among men of sense and moderation, thrown over past transactions.

In reflecting upon the ruinous state of our cathedrals, he faces about for once, and tells the English likewise, that their 'cathedrals are mouldering by unregarded dilapidation.' Here his own countrymen exclaim against his want of candour, and clearly convict him of a most audacious misrepresentation, by pointing out several large sums which have been lately expended on the reparation of some of their churches.

We have reason to complain of him in almost every page; and the present instance of his insincerity must satisfy others that we have not always had fair play. In traducing the Scots, he might hope, as the scene lies at a distance, to exercise the common, though not very honourable, privilege of a traveller, without fear of discovery. But what shall the world think of a man who, regardless of the infamy, ventures to trespass where detection is unavoidable? A sense of shame and a regard to truth generally go together; and when a man has lost the one, he seldom retains the other.

He says, page 33, that the first orchard and plantation of oak he saw in Scotland was at

Fochabers, though it is well known there were several of both kinds in his way, had he been disposed to observe them. But where the Doctor could not get a good dinner, a circumstance which is generally thought to have an uncommon influence on his narrations, he seldom found any agreeable objects.. At any rate it does not seem a very judicious situation for orchards, to place them so near the road, that a person who hardly sees his. finger-length before him should be able to descry them.

At Forres, Dr. Johnson found 'nothing worthy of particular remark.' Mr. Pennant, however, was a little more fortunate here, as well as every where else. "Near Forres," says that gentleman, "on the road side, is a vast column three feet ten inches broad, and one foot three inches thick; the height above the ground is twenty-three feet; below, as is said, twelve or fifteen feet. On one side are numbers of rude figures of animals and armed men, with colours flying: some of the men seemed bound like captives. On the opposite side was a cross included in a circle, and raised a little above the surface of the same. This is called King Sueno's Stone, and seems to be, as Mr. Gordon conjectures, erected by the Scots, in memory of the final retreat of the Danes." This monument of Scotch triumph over the Danes, who had put England under the

yoke, Dr. Johnson did not see, or he did not choose to record an event so much to their honour.

Before he left Forres, he might have found something worthy of remark in contemplating the ruins of the old castle, which stood at the west end of the town, and was formerly a place of great extent and strength. He might likewise have entertained himself agreeably by taking a view, from the town, of the fertile plain below, which stretches for many miles towards the sea, as well as to the East and West; and where he could have seen gentlemen's seats, with hedges, trees, and every other mark of cultivation, scattered before him in the most delightful profusion. But the Doctor mentions none of those things, as it was not his intention to give his reader the least favourable idea of the grandeur of our ancestors, or the industry of the present times.

Not far from this town, in his way to Nairn, he had an opportunity of seeing the castle of Tarnaway, an ancient and noble seat of the Earls of Murray. Here he would have found, what he pretends so often to have looked for in vain, parks. plantations, and natural woods in abundance; which, with other beauties of nature and art, might sufficiently compensate for the trouble of a short peep as he went along; it would not have taken him much out of his way, and he would

have made a shift to visit a popish church, or even the ruins of one, at a greater distance.

Of Fort George, which he owns to be the most regular in the island, he mentions little else than the good entertainment he received at the governor's table. His pretence for not giving a more particular account of this important place is, because he could not 'delineate it scientifically;' as he phrases it. But the true reason was; that he did not wish his countrymen to know that there was any thing in the North of so superior a nature, and so well worth their seeing. Had Fort George, instead of what it is, been the meanest and most irregular in the island, the good Doctor would have found other language to delineate it, if he could not be scientifically exact; or, in other words, where science failed, sarcasm would have done the rest.

'Page 35. One can hardly forbear smiling to hear him talk of Scotland being conquered by Cromwell. But a man must have little knowledge of facts, or still less honesty, who can gravely advance such an opinion; as it is well known to every person who is in the least acquainted with history, that Scotland has never been conquered. The country has been often invaded, and its armies have been sometimes defeated, but it never yet has submitted to a foreign yoke.

To reduce Scotland was an attempt that defied the whole power of the Roman empire, even at the height of its glory. The Danes, who made so easy a conquest of England, acquired nothing but death and graves in Scotland; and the united fraud, force, and perseverence of Edward the First, and some of his successors, though always assisted by a powerful faction in the country, could never subdue the spirit of a people who were determined to be free, and disdained the control of a usurper.

But in order to clear up this matter a little, it is necessary to stop the Doctor for a while, in his journey and conquests, and desire him, by way of prelude, to look back, and see what antiquity says on the subject.

In the year 55 before Christ, when Julius Cæsar invaded Britain, it is known he was repulsed with considerable loss. Afterwards, in the year 165, it appears from history, that the Caledonians cut the Romans to pieces; while the English historians, however ready on most occasions to do ample justice to their country, do not pretend to say, that South Britain, at that era, made any stand against that warlike people.

Ammianus Marcellinus owns that the North Britons killed Fullofaudes, a Roman general, and Nectarides, count of the maritime coast. Theodosius, one of the most renowned generals of the

times, was then sent with a powerful army against them, and relieved the city of London, then under dreadful apprehensions from the North Britons.

After repeated attempts of the Romans to conquer the Caledonians, the emperor Severus went himself in person against them, in the year 208, with the strength of the whole empire; and though he had the assistance of South Britain, and of part of the South of Scotland, then Roman provinces, he was contented at last, after a loss of more than seventy thousand * men in one campaign, to treat with them and the Meates, † and erect a new wall to stop their incursions.

Twenty years after the death of Severus, the Caledonians were considered as such formidable enemies, that Dio tells us, in his account of the disposition of the Roman legions, about the year 230, that the Romans kept two legions on the borders against the unconquered Britons; whereas one legion was sufficient to keep all the rest of Britain in subjection. ‡

* Stillingfleet, an English writer, acknowledges on the authority of Tacitus, that the Romans lost seventy thousand men in one year fighting against the North Britons.

† The ancient name of the people in that part of Scotland which lies on the south of the river Clyde.

‡ Lib. lv. 564.

This is the account which the most candid and unexceptionable of the Roman historians gives of this matter. From hence, therefore, it appears, that the Romans, even at a time when they were masters of the known world, and had attained to their highest pitch of grandeur, were sometimes obliged to compound matters with the Caledonians, and at last utterly to abandon all thoughts of conquering a people whom they generously confessed to be the most warlike they had ever encountered.

Here, I must own, I cannot help being in some pain for the poor Doctor's situation, as he must surely strain hard to swallow this harsh pill; and yet, disagreeable as it is, down it must go, since this is not a story founded upon 'Scotch narration.'

But further, it will readily occur to the intelligent reader, that the inroads of the Romans, as well as those of Edward the First, hardly reached, and never went beyond Druim-alba; so that at the worst, supposing all the tract to the southward to have been completely conquered, instead of being only overrun sometimes, the greatest part of the country must still have retained its liberty.

I am sensible, that with some a common answer to all this is, "That the conquest of Scotland was not worth while." Should Doctor Johnson choose to retreat under the same cover, let him inform us,

if he can, why so sensible a people as the Romans should persevere so long, and be so very obstinate in their last effort, as to sacrifice seventy thousand men in the pursuit of so contemptible an object? And why Edward the First of England, among whose failings folly has never been reckoned the chief, should have employed almost his whole life, and wasted so much blood and treasure, on the same unprofitable attempt? From hence, I think, it does not seem very probable, that such an acquisition was formerly deemed a matter of so little consequence; whatever may now be the opinion of a wiser posterity. It must be confessed, however, that the answer is a convenient one; it is like cutting the Gordian knot, which could not be untied.

As to the conquest so ridiculously ascribed to Cromwell, little need be said to such as are acquainted with the circumstances of those times. A powerful party of the Scots had early opposed the impolitic measures of the king, and they were the first to appear in the field against him; though from different motives, they had embarked in the same enterprise with Cromwell, and consequently there could be no ground of quarrel between them. When, therefore, that regicide went afterwards to the North, it was not to conquer a whole kingdom, but only to curb a party that still continued to act

for the royal cause; and even in that he was assisted by many of their own countrymen, who were sanguine enemies to the House of Stuart. Had he gone with more ambitious views, and against a united people, his expedition might have ended, like many others from the same quarter, in a manner which Dr. Johnson would not choose to relate.

None surely can be weak enough to believe that Cromwell could do more in a few weeks, than the most renowned commanders had been able to achieve in as many centuries. The whole glory of this conquest, therefore, must belong to the Doctor alone. What could not be done in the field, he has accomplished in his closet, and shamed the sword of the soldier with one dash of his pen.

The Doctor next proceeds to enumerate the many and great advantages which we derived from the loss of our freedom. He says, page 36, Cromwell 'civilized them by conquest, and introduced by useful violence the arts of peace:' and then, as the sum total of these valuable arts, he adds very gravely, that he 'was told at Aberdeen, that the people learned from Cromwell's soldiers to make shoes and to plant kail.'

These to be sure were two very good things, as they administered at once both to our external and internal wants; but that our traveller should be told so at Aberdeen, seems rather a little sus-

picious. That has long been a city of extensive trade and frequent intercourse with the continent of Europe: it cannot be supposed, therefore, that the people were strangers to the making of shoes at that period; unless we can suppose at the same time, that no such thing as shoes were then in use any where else; and that Cromwell's soldiers were afterwards dispersed among all nations, as so many missionary cobblers, to instruct the people in that useful art of peace.

But let the Doctor's credibility stand or fall by his own testimony. He acknowledges, page 37, that the Scots are ingenious and inquisitive; that they had early attained the liberal arts; and excelled in ornamental knowledge. Is it consistent with such a description then, that a manual art for supplying so essential a conveniency of life, should be totally unknown to them? Even among a ruder people, the feelings of nature would certainly suggest expedients, however imperfect, to guard against the rigours of particular seasons and climates.

We come next to consider the probability of what relates to the article of kail. Dr. Johnson would no doubt insinuate, that kail and other garden vegetables had abounded in England long before they were cultivated in Scotland; but if he consults Anderson's History of the Rise and Pro-

gress of Commerce, he will find that our southern neighbours have so little to boast of in this particular, that in 1509 there was not a sallad in all England, and that cabbages, carrots, turnips, and other plants and roots, were imported from the Netherlands. The whole country could not furnish a single sallad, &c. for Henry the Eighth's queen, till gardeners and different sorts of plants were brought from foreign countries.

Let this be compared with what we read in a history of Scotland by John Leslie, popish bishop of Ross, who flourished in the year 1560, and dedicated his book to the pope. In the second edition of this work, printed at Rome in 1675, the Doctor will find, that in the bishop's time, Glasgow was a market famous not only for wine, &c., but that it likewise abounded in orchards and garden herbs.* And again, that Murray was famous for all sorts of corn, and likewise for orchards, &c.† It is not very likely then, that a country which abounded in these things should want so ordinary an article as common kail.

From hence it appears, as bishop Leslie wrote

* Page 11. Glasguam celeberrimum emporium vini, aquæ vitæ Brogat, &c. &c. &c. pomiferis hortis et hortensibus herbis abundans.

† Page 26. Moravia omni frumenti genere, pomiferis hortis, &c. delectat.

about a century before Cromwell went to Scotland, that Dr. Johnson's account of this matter cannot be just. And indeed I am apt to think, if he had any information at all, it was a mere trick of some wag, who diverted himself with his English vanity, and now laughs at his weakness for recording a Canterbury tale.

After concluding his history of kail, the Doctor gives a specimen of his abilities as a philosopher. 'How they lived without kail,' says he, 'it is not easy to guess; they cultivate hardly any other plant for common tables, and when they had not kail they probably had nothing.' What force of reasoning! How beautiful, how just the conclusion! The fable of the Cameleon needs no longer give surprise. Air is something to live upon; but this miracle of English erudition has found out, that a whole nation of people can live for ages upon nothing. All great discoveries, to be sure, have been reserved for that favourite spot of heaven, called England. But Dr. Johnson's *nothing* surpasses *every thing!*

In the last quoted page, he acknowledges, that 'literature, soon after its revival, found its way to Scotland, and from the middle of the sixteenth century, almost to the middle of the seventeenth, the politer studies were very diligently pursued.' The force of truth seems, for once, to have unsealed

the Doctor's eyelids. But the apparent candour of this confession is effaced by his concealing, that the Scots had likewise their share of the sciences before the subversion of learning. Such of them as were known in Europe at the time, were cultivated at Iona, Oronsa, and other places, so early as the fifth and sixth centuries. Collum Cille, or St. Columba, came to Iona about the year 565, and of his age the forty-third; which was a hundred and thirty-five years after the building of that abbey by Fergus the Second.

King Edwin, of Saxon race, first embraced Christianity only in 627; whereas it had prevailed in Scotland since 165. Oswald, king of Northumberland, sent for learned men to Scotland in 634. St. Aidan was consecrated bishop of Northumberland in 635. Finan, from Iona, succeeded him in 652. Colman succeeded Finan in 661, but retired to Scotland again in 664, when the dispute about Easter and the Tonsure was decided in the synod against him.

In the reign of Malduinus, who succeeded to the crown of Scotland in 668, Buchanan says, " the Scottish monks propagated the doctrines of Christ over almost all England, and had so instructed the English youth, that now they seemed able of themselves to preach the gospel in a proper man-

ner to their countrymen; but their envy against their masters grew in proportion to their learning; and their prejudice in this respect went so far, that the Scottish monks were obliged to return to their own country. Though this contumely cut off, at that time, the concord between the two nations, the modesty of those who had received the insult, kept both kingdoms from an open war."

From this event, the violence on one side, and moderation on the other, the reader can easily trace out the ancient characteristic of the two nations; and if we may judge from that good temper with which the Scots have, of late years, borne the invectives of their southern neighbours, the same traits of national character will still appear uniformly to distinguish both. The indecent scurrilities of a Churchill, a Wilkes, and others, and more latterly, the coarser attacks of a Johnson, have not hitherto met with any other mark of resentment than a silent contempt.

In the bishop of Ross's book * we may see, that about the year 273, there flourished among the Scots, Amphibalus, Modacus, and many other men

* Floruere circa hæc tempora (A. D. 273) apud Scotos Amphibalus, Modacus, &c. &c. multique alii viri, doctrina et religione insignes, Dei cultores (Culdei nostra lingua vulgari dicti). Page 115.

eminent for their learning and religion, who were worshippers of God, and called, in our common language, viz. the Gaelic, Culdich (or Culdees).

We may observe from the famous passage in Tertullian, wrote about A. D. 209, that there were already believers in Christ, even in those parts of the island which the Romans had not been able to subdue. *

Before the end of the fourth century the Christian religion was spread from one end of the province of Valencia to the other; a space comprehending the South-west part of Scotland, from the Solway Frith to Dumbarton. St. Ninian was born of Christian parents in what was afterwards called Galloway, and formed the one extremity of this province; and in the other, near Dumbarton, St. Patrick was also born of Christian parents, and in a place wholly peopled by Christians. And those two saints became, by themselves and their disciples, the first apostles of the Picts and Scots, both in Scotland and in Ireland. Last of all, the Saxons of the north of England were also converted by St. Aidan, as already mentioned, in the seventh century.

These few hints relative to the rise and progress

* Britannorum inaccessa loca, Christo vero subdita. Tertullian contra Judæos, cap. 7.

of civilization in general, and of Christianity in particular, in both kingdoms, will, it is to be hoped, pull down one story at least of the Doctor's height, and satisfy the public that the odds, in point of time, is greatly in favour of Scotland.

Page 37. He says, the Scots must be for ever content to owe to the English all their elegance and culture. Had the Doctor been here giving an account of any other nation in Europe, I make no doubt but he would likewise have found some opportunity of making a similar claim in favour of old England. Our good neighbours have been always pretty remarkable for the modest virtue of self-applause, and considering their own country, at all times and in all things, as the true standard of all perfection.

What has been already said, concerning our early connexion with France, may be a sufficient answer to the absurdity and arrogance of this assertion. It is with an ill grace, indeed, that the English pretend to be a model of taste for others: they themselves are daily copying from the Gallic school; and though they have been long under tutorage, the world have not yet conceived any high opinion of their elegance and culture. In spite of discipline, there is still a roughness in their manners which has rendered them proverbial.

But the frequent repetition of the above remark,

to be found in the Doctor's performance, renders it necessary to have recourse to a few facts, for setting that matter in a proper light: and, therefore, I must recal his attention to some circumstances relating to the state of the two kingdoms, long before any friendly intercourse between them could give us an opportunity of receiving those boasted improvements.

In the year 1234, straw was used for the king's bed in England. In 1300, wine was sold in England, only by apothecaries, as a cordial. But it was then quite otherways in Scotland, because of our extensive trade, in proportion to the commerce of those days, with France and Spain; and till I adverted to this circumstance, it often surprised me to find frequent mention made, in many of our ancient Gaelic poems, of the drinking of wine and burning of wax in the habitations of our chieftains. In 1340, the parliamentary grants to the king of England were only in kind; and thirty thousand sacks of wool was this year's grant. In 1505, the first shilling was coined in England. In 1561, Queen Elizabeth wore the first pair of knitted silk stockings that ever were in that country. In 1543, pins were first made in England; and before that time the ladies used skewers.

To all this let me oppose, but particularly to the skewers of the English ladies, the account

which the bishop of Ross gives of the dress of the women among the ancient Scots. We shall there find, "that they were clothed with purple and embroidery of most exquisite workmanship, with bracelets and necklaces on their arms and necks, so as to make a most graceful appearance."* Nor needs it be matter of surprise how the Scots had opportunities of procuring such ornaments, since the same author shows they had, at that time, a considerable trade with France and Spain, from Inverlochy, near Fort William.†

After this view of the matter, it is difficult to say, whether we are to accuse Dr. Johnson of ignorance, or insincerity, in what he has so boldly, but with so little appearance of justice, asserted. It is certain, had he been in the least acquainted with the history of his own country, he might easily have seen, that the English have been a little too tardy in their own improvements, to

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* Mulierum habitus apud illos (scil. priscos Scotos) decentissimus erat. Nam talari tunicæ, arte phrygia ut plurimum confectæ, amplas chlamydes atque illas quidem polymitas, superinduerunt. Illarum brachia armillis, et colla monilibus elegantius ornata, maximam habent decoris speciem. Page 55.

† Ad Louchææ ostia sita olim erat opulentissima civitas Inverlothæa appellata, ad quam Galli, Hispanique, commercii causa frequentius trajecerant. Hæc postea a Norvegis, Danisque eversa, et nunquam a nobis deinceps, quæ nostra est ignavia, instauratur. Page 23.

support them in any decent claim of having civilized their neighbours.

But notwithstanding all that can be said to the contrary, the Doctor seems determined, right or wrong, to maintain his position. He therefore goes on, and tells us again very roundly, that till the union made the Scots acquainted with English manners, 'their tables were coarse as the feasts of Eskimeaux, and their houses filthy as the cottages of Hottentots.' There is an expression among lawyers, "That what proves too much, proves nothing." It is just so with my worthy friend the Doctor, in this place: he has laid on his filth so very thick, that I am of opinion it will fall off by its own weight.

But in the name of wonder, who could expect such a remark to drop from the pen of a man on whom the witty Lord Chesterfield, many years ago, bestowed the appellation of Hottentot?* His lordship was allowed not only to be a good judge of character, but likewise to have a good hand at drawing a likeness. It was, therefore, unlucky in our Author to come blundering out with an expression which must call to our remembrance this

* When talking of our Author, the Earl of Chesterfield said, That he could never consider Dr. Johnson in any other point of view than as a more respectable kind of Hottentot

striking specimen of the noble artist's skill. For I will be bold to affirm, that no man has ever yet seen Dr. Johnson in the act of feeding, or beheld the inside of his cell in Fleet-street, but would think the feasts of Eskimeaux or the cottages of Hottentots injured by a comparison.

But supposing the Doctor's charge to hold good in very distant times, let me ask him whether England and every other country under the sun has not had its ages of ignorance and barbarity? If this solemn pedant will deign to look back, he will find many things in the history of his own country which ought to convince him that civilization did not begin very early there, nor advance with a quick pace. I am always sorry when I am obliged to trace out anecdotes of this kind; but his ill manners and want of candour render it necessary.

Alfred the Great, who died in the year 900, complained, "that from the Humber to the Thames there was not a priest that understood the Liturgy in his mother-tongue; and that from the Thames to the sea there was not one that could translate the easiest piece of Latin. This universal ignorance, and the little relish the English had for arts and sciences, made the King invite learned and ingenious foreigners." In 1167 King Henry the Second sends to Ireland, and causes build a

palace of wattles in Dublin, after the manner of the country, wherein he keeps his Christmas. It was not till 1209 that London began to be governed by a Mayor; and so near our own times as the year 1246, most of the houses in that capital were thatched with straw, the windows were without glass, and all the fires stood to the wall without chimneys. In the year 1300, and afterwards, almost all the houses in England were built of wood, &c.

Such facts as these are the surest tests of the progress of civilization in any country, as they show the taste and manners of the inhabitants at different periods of time. If the Doctor doubts their authenticity, he will find them confirmed by Rapin and other historians.

As our traveller gives us only his own authority for what he says of Scotland at the time of the union, a testimony which the reader, by this time, cannot think altogether unexceptionable; let us now see what others have reported of the state of civilization among us long before that period.

When Margaret, daughter of Henry the Seventh of England, became the Queen of our James the Fourth, she was attended to the Scotch court by many of the first nobility of both sexes; and yet the English historians of those days allow, that they were fully equalled, or even excelled, by the

Scotch nobility, in politeness of manners, the number of their jewels, and the richness of their dress; and particularly, that the entertainments they received at the houses of our great people did not yield to any thing they had ever seen.

In 1546, Contarini was the Pope's legate in Scotland; and upon his return to the continent, he celebrated the Scotch nation as a polite and hospitable people. He bore this testimony to their merit, though he could not succeed in the object of his embassy; which was, to support the Romish religion, then fast declining in that kingdom, on account of the intolerable cruelties of Cardinal Beatoun. But this prelate, very unlike to Dr. Johnson, could not permit his prejudices as an ambassador to warp his veracity as a man.

The Queen of James the Fifth, though a princess of so civilized a nation as France, acknowledged, That the court and inhabitants of Scotland were the most polite and civilized she had ever seen, and the palace of Linlithgow the most magnificent.

As a further specimen of our tables, let us take the Earl of Athole's feast to James the Fifth, as related by Lindsay the historian.

"Syne (then) the next summer the King past to the Highland to hunt in Athole, and took with him his mother, Margaret Queen of Scotland, and

an Embassador of the Pope's, who was in Scotland for the time. The Earl of Athole, hearing of the King's coming, made great provision in all things pertaining to a prince, that he was as well served and eased, with all things necessary to his estate, as he had been in his own palace of Edinburgh. For I heard say, this noble Earl gart (caused) make a curious palace to the King, to his mother, and to the Embassador, where they were so honourably eased and lodged as they had been in England, France, Italy, or Spain, concerning the time, and equivalent for their hunting and pastime; which was builded in the midst of a fair meadow, a fair palace of green timber, wind with green birks, that were green both under and above; which was fashioned in four quarters, and in every quarter and nuik thereof a great round, as it had been a block-house, which was lofted and gested the space of three house height; the floors laid with green scarets and spreats, medwarts and flowers, that no man knew whereon he zeid, but as he had been in a garden. Further, there were two great rounds in ilk side of the gate, and a great portculleis of tree, falling down with the manner of a barrace, with a drawbridge, and a great stank of water of sixteen foot deep, and thirty foot of breadth. And also this palace within was hung with fine tapestry and arrasses of silk, and lighted

with fine glass windows in all airths (directions); that this place was as pleasantly decored with all necessaries pertaining to a prince, as it had been his own palace-royal at home. Further, this Earl gart make such provision for the King, and his mother, and the Embassador, that they had all manner of meats, drinks and delicates that were to be gotten at that time, in all Scotland, either in burgh or land; that is to say, all kind of drink, as ale, beer, wine both white and claret, malvery, muskadel, hippocras and aqua vitæ. Further, there was of meats, white-bread, main-bread, and ginge-bread, with fleshes, beef, mutton, lamb, veal, venison, goose, grice, capon, coney, cran, swan, partridge, plover, duck, drake, brisse-cock, and pawnies, black-cock and muir-fowl cappercaillies: and also the stanks that were round about the palace were full of all delicate fishes, as salmonds, trouts, pearches, pikes, eels, and all other kind of delicate fishes that could be gotten in fresh waters; and all ready for the banket. Syne were there proper stewards, cunning baxters, excellent cooks and potengars, with confections and drugs for their deserts: and the halls and chambers were prepared with costly bedding, vessel and napery, according for a king; so that he wanted none of his orders more than he had been at home in his own palace. The King remained in this wilder-

ness, at the hunting, the space of three days and three nights, and his company, as I have shown. I heard men say, it cost the Earl of Athole, every day, in expenses a thousand pounds.

"The Embassador of the Pope, seeing this great banquet and triumph which was made in the wilderness, where there was no town near by twenty miles, thought it a great marvel, that such a thing should be in Scotland, considering that it was named the end of the world by other countries; and that there should be such honesty and policy in it, especially in the Highland, where there was so much wood and wilderness. But most of all, this Embassador marvelled to see, when the King departed, and all his men took their leave, the Highlandmen set all this fair place on a fire, that the King and the Embassador might see it. Then the Embassador said to the King, 'I marvel, Sir, that you should thole (suffer) yon fair place to be burnt, that your Grace has been so well lodged in.' Then the King answered the Embassador, and said, 'It is the use of our Highlandmen, though they be never so well lodged, to burn their lodging when they depart.'" See Lindsay's History of Scotland, p. 266, &c.

From these circumstances it may appear, should the Journey to the Hebrides survive its author.

how miserably deceived they must be, who, in future times, shall take the Doctor's account of Scotland for truth. When, therefore, he boasts of the advantages which, in these respects, the Scots have derived from the union, he ought to have assigned a cause, why we were less refined in the beginning of the eighteenth century, than our forefathers have been proved to have been some centuries before. Either, then, he is unacquainted with our ancient manners, or he grossly misrepresents our modern character. His ignorance, therefore, or his malice, whichever the Doctor shall think the most eligible, can only account for the presumption of his assertions.

But were we to admit, with our traveller, that the English have taught us how to procure any of the good things of this life, it might fairly be said, that they have likewise taught us the art of spending them. We daily see more of a clumsy affectation, tasteless extravagance, and giddy dissipation, which many of our countrymen carry home with them from the south side of the Tweed, than of polite improvements, or useful inventions. If these are the advantages which Dr. Johnson means to charge against us in favour of the English, as the precious effects of the union, he has an undoubted right to persist in his claim, and we are ready to acknowledge ourselves their debtors.

At the same time, we do not mean to disclaim all advantages from the union, but only to show, that they are not of that kind which Dr. Johnson insinuates. Considered in a political light, it was certainly a wise and salutary measure for both kingdoms; but, even in that view, the English are the principal gainers. The Doctor cannot well deny this position, if he but recollects, that the English were the first to propose the union, and that it was at length carried with difficulty in Scotland. They call themselves a generous people; but we cannot suppose them to be so very extravagantly so, as to take so much pains in pressing a measure, from which WE were to reap the chief advantages. If this really was the case, they had surely a much greater love and affection for their fellow-subjects of the North in the reign of Queen Anne, than, I am afraid, they possess for them in the reign of George the Third, if we are to judge of the whole nation from the sample given us by Dr. Johnson, who is reckoned one of their wisest and best men.

Page 38 brings our traveller to a road upon which 'no wheel had ever rolled.' There can appear nothing extraordinary in this remark, unless the good Doctor had asserted, at the same time, that every by-road in England was fit for a carriage. We have already seen, that in 1300 all the

houses in England were built of wood; and long after that period it was accounted a sort of luxury to ride in a two-wheeled cart. Besides, if we may credit even English historians, their favourite Queen Elizabeth had no other mode of travelling, than by riding behind one of her domestics; which evidently shows, that the rolling of wheels has not been so very long known, or generally practised, even in England itself. But further, I am credibly informed, that within these forty years, a time, I presume, within the Doctor's remembrance, most of the roads within twenty miles of London were hardly fit for riding, much less for carriages. Who then but our traveller could remark, that, in the remote and unfrequented parts of the mountains of Scotland, there were not regular post roads?

In page 39 he finds out, that 'civility seems part of the national character of Highlanders.' If ever Dr. Johnson has his good-humoured intervals, this compliment certainly escaped him in one of them. But how are we to reconcile this with the epithets of rude, barbarous, gross, savage, &c., which, in other parts of his work, he so liberally bestows on the whole nation? If the decent behaviour of common horse-hirers, to use a Scottish expression, who attended him in his journey, extorted this confession from him, we cannot well suppose, that he found the better sort of people

deficient in agreeable qualifications. Either, then, the Doctor means something by the civility of his horse-hirers, which is not understood by others, or his national epithets can have no foundation in truth. We should, therefore, be glad to hear him give some consistent explanation of these particulars; as the civility of a rude and barbarous, or, in other words, of an uncivilised people, conveys an uncommon sort of idea. For my part, I have looked into his own Dictionary, and could not find, even in that perverter of the English language, any definition of the above terms that can make them hang together.

When riding along the side of Loch Ness, a ray of good-humour seems to have stolen into the Doctor's mind. For a while we find him pleased with the goodness of the road, and the cheerfulness of the day; but this sudden gleam, like sunshine before a storm, was of short duration. His natural gloominess soon returns; and his restless caprice finds a thousand faults. At that season of the year no mortal, but himself, could have quarrelled with the objects around him. If ever the wild magnificence of nature could please, that day's journey furnished ample matter of entertainment. Even his own description of the scene through which he passed, in spite of all his endeavours to the contrary, conveys enough to the mind of the

reader to make him regret that he has not a more perfect view.

He gives, here and there, a peep of some beauties which he saw; but unluckily, as on most other occasions, he seems less willing to exhibit these at full length, than to point out a rock 'sometimes towering in horrid nakedness.'

From the banks of Loch Ness the Doctor turns his observation to its waters. He had been told at Fort Augustus, that it continues open in the hardest winters, though another lake not far from it is covered with ice. This being an exception from the common course of things, he seems much disposed to doubt the fact; for he will not suffer nature to sport with her own laws in Scotland, except in producing deformities. Then, indeed, she may play as many wild pranks as she thinks proper; and she pleases him the better, the more, like himself, she becomes a Rambler.

As there could be no motive to deceive him in a matter of so little consequence to the country, as the freezing or not freezing of Loch Ness, it is strange he should expose his own weakness, by taking so much pains to render it doubtful. He disputes this trivial fact with a solemnity truly ridiculous. At length, however, finding himself unable to give any decent colour to his objections, he endeavours to account for so singular a pheno-

menon; though still with this cautious proviso, 'if it be true.' But this he does in a manner so very unphilosophical, as clearly shows, either that natural inquiries have not made a great part of the Doctor's studies, or that his genius is not much adapted to such nice researches. Every man has his peculiar gift from nature; and to compile vocabularies, or compound hard words, seems to be the task which she has allotted for our traveller. He ought therefore to confine himself to his proper province, remembering the maxim, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam.*

In Glenmollison, the Doctor seems surprised, that the innkeeper's daughter showed no sort of embarrassment in his presence. So, indeed, are most others who have read that passage, as she certainly had never seen "his like" before. But the little gipsy, it seems, was not to be moved by the elegance of his figure, the softness of his address, or the splendour of his reputation. She was saucy enough to appear perfect mistress of herself, without betraying the least mark of diffidence, confusion, or the melting power of love.

At this place he takes care to refresh our memory with his bounty to the soldiers, whom he passed on the road, and who came to the same inn to spend the evening. One would be tempted to think, that acts of generosity are but rare things

with the Doctor, when he dwells so ostentatiously on this trifling piece of liberality.

In page 56, he discovers what seems to have been one of his motives for undertaking his journey, namely, an inclination to dissuade all such strangers as would be directed by him from ever visiting Scotland, as being altogether unworthy of the attention of the curious. In proof of this he says, that 'uniformity of barrenness can afford very little amusement to the traveller; that it is easy to sit at home and conceive rocks, and heath, and waterfalls; and that these journeys are useless labours, which neither impregnate the imagination nor enlarge the understanding.'

If rocks, heath, and waterfalls constitute uniformity, I should be glad to learn from the Doctor wherein variety consists? As to his reasoning in the above passage, he saves me the trouble of a refutation, by having immediately after refuted himself. After the easy mode of information which he had proposed, viz. by sitting at home and conceiving what he pleased, who would expect to hear him, in the same page, express himself as follows? But 'these ideas are always incomplete,' and, 'till we have compared them with realities, we do not know them to be just. As we see more, we become possessed of more certainties, and consequently gain more principles of reasoning, and found a

wider basis of analogy. Regions mountainous and wild, thinly inhabited, and little cultivated, make a great part of the earth, and he that has never seen them must live unacquainted with much of the face of nature, and with one of the great scenes of human existence.' Let the reader now judge of the consistency between this language and what he had before asserted, 'that these journeys are useless labours, which neither impregnate the imagination nor enlarge the understanding.'

We have oftener than once seen the Doctor in the same awkward situation, saying and unsaying in the same breath. Who but himself would not have drawn his pen through the former lines, after adding the latter? But he seems to be above cancelling any thing he has once set down; otherwise he is too indolent to give himself the trouble of correction.

After endeavouring to impress the mind of his reader with the wildness of the hills of Glenmollison, he seems afraid of having said too much, and making the country appear too remarkable, even by allowing it to be so very mountainous. He therefore instantly sweeps away this negative compliment by asking, 'Yet what are these hillocks to the ridges of Taurus, or these spots of wilderness to the deserts of America?' This churlish author will not allow us to excel even in wildness.

It was in these hills, while sitting on a bank to let the horses rest, about the middle of the day, that the Doctor tells us he 'first conceived the thought of his narration.' Should we pay his veracity the compliment of believing this to be true, we must certainly allow him to be endowed with a retentive memory. There are so many minutiæ in the preceding part of his narration, that it is surprising they could occur without the assistance of some previous memorandums; and yet we can see no reason for his being at that trouble before he had conceived the thought of making use of them.

Speaking still of the same spot, he says, 'We were in this place at ease and by choice, and had no evils to suffer or to fear.' If this was really so, how can he say afterwards, page 65, that the Highlanders live by theft and robbery? It was certainly very bold in the Doctor to fear nothing, in the midst of their wildest mountains, if the character he gives the inhabitants be just. But, indeed, it is not easy for any reader, who is unacquainted with the country, to form any consistent idea of the people from Dr. Johnson's vague and contradictory accounts of them.

Page 65 he says, that 'thirty years ago, no herd had ever been conducted through the mountains, without paying tribute in the night to some of the

clans.' This, however, is a gross misrepresentation. There are many people still living, who drove hundreds of cattle through the mountains long before that period, and never once paid the tribute he mentions. Here, therefore, we may retort upon himself the substance of a sage observation, which, in page 41, he applies to the Highlanders concerning the freezing of Loch Ness; and that is, that accuracy of narration is not very common with him, and that he is seldom so rigidly philosophical as not to represent as constant, what is sometimes only casual.

He acknowledges, page 66, that the different clans were 'unconnected with the general system, and accustomed to reverence only their own lords.' If this really was so, their quarrels with their neighbours, and the mutual injuries resulting from them, are to be explained on the same liberal principles as those which daily happen between the most independent states. The rule of morality is the same in both cases; and injury always justifies retaliation, whether we speak of the Highland clans, or of larger communities.

Under the same head, in speaking of the power of the chiefs, he says, 'those who had thus the dispensation of law, were by consequence themselves lawless. Their vassals had no shelter from outrages and oppressions; but were condemned

to endure, without resistance, the caprices of wantonness, and the rage of cruelty.' Here the Doctor betrays his total ignorance of the ancient law of chieftainry. The chiefs, or dispensers of laws, as he calls them, knew their own interest much better than ever to think of adopting the Doctor's tyrannical plan. They were under a necessity of acting in a much more humane and mild manner towards their clans, or people, as they knew that their own security and importance depended on their attachment; and that, without that, their power and influence would be nothing. Even he himself confesses, page 130, that 'the laird was the father of his clan.' I leave it to himself to reconcile so glaring a contradiction, and to convince the world, if he can, that a cruel oppressor and a kind father are one and the same thing.

In page 72 he mentions an old anecdote, which, he says, he was told at Sir Alexander Macdonald's table, and which relates to a very barbarous effect of the feuds between two of the clans, if in reality such an event ever existed; though, at the same time, we are not to suppose that the same spirit of revenge, in those remote and less polished times, was peculiar to the Highlands. But be that as it may, he takes occasion to make the following remark: 'Narrations like this,' says he, 'however uncertain, deserve the notice of a traveller, because

they are the only records of a nation that has no historians, and afford the most genuine representation of the life and character of the ancient Highlanders.'

Here it is observable, that the Doctor admits the testimony of Highlanders, because, in his opinion, it makes against their country. But had the matter been in their favour, he would neither have recorded nor believed it.

It may, perhaps, be true, that Highlanders in general have been too negligent in committing to writing what related to their country. In remote ages, they trusted too much to their bards and senachies, as other nations then did. What they wrote at Iona and elsewhere, on that and other subjects, was destroyed by various accidents. Historians affirm, that Iona suffered six different devastations in the tenth century alone. What escaped those ravages was carried away either by that generous friend to learning and the Scots nation, Edward the First, in the same spirit of meekness in which he butchered the Welsh bards, or afterwards by Oliver Cromwell, and other scourges and destroyers of antiquities, who wanted to abolish every monument of the ancient independence of this nation; or, lastly, by our own priests at the time of the Reformation.

Every thing relating to the Highlands, in

particular, has met with many discouragements of late years. This, no doubt, has occasioned many other valuable vouchers to be buried in an oblivion, from which, in all probability, we shall never be able to recover them.

The Doctor is egregiously mistaken when he says that the Highlanders have no particular historians. It seems he has never heard of Macaulay, the two Macphersons, Martin, the Dean of the Isles, &c. It is to the historical and other superior merits of some of these gentlemen, that their country is indebted for so much of the Doctor's critical regard. Had they never written so well, he had never been so scurrilous. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* Buchanan too was a Highlander; as was likewise St. Ninian, who was born in Galloway, then a Highland country; and St. Patrick was born near Dumbarton.

His observations in the two following pages are of so extraordinary a nature, and furnish such unequivocal proofs of his rancour and malevolence, that I shall give them at full length.

Pages 73, 74. 'My inquiries about brogues gave me an early specimen of Highland information. One day I was told, that to make brogues was a domestic art, which every man practised for himself, and that a pair of brogues was the work of an hour. I supposed that the husband made

brogues as the wife made an apron, till next day it was told me, that a brogue-maker was a trade, and that a pair would cost half-a-crown. It will easily occur that these representations may both be true, and that, in some places, men may buy them, and in others make them for themselves; but I had both the accounts in the same house within two days.

'Many of my subsequent inquiries upon more interesting topics ended in the like uncertainty. He that travels in the Highlands may easily saturate his soul with intelligence, if he will acquiesce in the first account. The Highlander gives to every question an answer so prompt and peremptory, that scepticism itself is dared into silence, and the mind sinks before the bold reporter in unresisting credulity; but if a second question is ventured, it breaks the enchantment; for it is immediately discovered, that what was told so confidently was told at hazard, and that such fearlessness of assertion was either the sport of negligence, or the refuge of ignorance.

'If individuals are thus at variance with themselves, it can be no wonder that the accounts of different men are contradictory. The traditions of an ignorant and savage people have been for ages negligently heard, and unskilfully related. Distant events must have been mingled together, and

the actions of one man given to another. These, however, are deficiencies in story, for which no man is now to be censured. It were enough, if what there is yet opportunity of examining were accurately inspected, and justly represented; but such is the laxity of Highland conversation, that the inquirer is kept in continual suspense, and by a kind of intellectual retrogradation, knows less as he hears more.'

In this learned harangue on the important subject of brogue-making, the Doctor makes a double discovery. First, he shows, that two different accounts may be given of the same thing, and yet both may be true. In the next place, he proves, after making this acknowledgment, that the subsequent part of his criticism has no object; and, consequently, that it is as nugatory in itself as his conclusions are false and improbable. To make a silly story about the art of brogue-making the test of national candour and sincerity, is too ridiculous for any pen but that of Dr. Johnson.

It is true, in order to account, in some measure, for his going *beyond his last*, he tells us, that many of his subsequent inquiries upon more interesting topics ended in the like uncertainty. It were well if he had mentioned what these interesting topics were, to whom his inquiries were addressed, and what answers he received. A knowledge of these

circumstances would enable us to decide more certainly on the merits of his succeeding remarks. The Doctor, less anxious, perhaps, to 'saturate his soul with intelligence,' than to satiate his prejudices against Scotland with the means of misrepresentation, might have adopted such a mode of inquiry as would best answer his purpose.

He might, for instance, question one of his brogue-makers concerning some nice point of antiquity, to which the poor fellow could make but a very imperfect answer. The next tailor he met with might vary, in some circumstances, from the former; and a third person, not better informed than either of them, might differ a little from both. What then? Is there any thing surprising or uncommon in all this? Or can such a variation in the accounts of illiterate mechanics justify the Doctor's general inference, That there can be no reliance upon Highland narration?

Should there remain the least doubt upon this head, let me suppose, for argument's sake, that I am making a similar tour through some parts of England. In the course of my travels, I see the ruins of some old abbey, or, as the Doctor would more elegantly express it, the 'dilapidated remains of ancient sanctity.' I wish to know something of its history, and accost the first labourer

I find in the neighbouring fields to obtain information: he gives me, very honestly, no doubt, some confused scraps of what he had heard concerning it; but his story is full of perplexity, and several parts of it differ considerably from others. I then inquire of one after another, but with little better success. At length, tired with the deficiencies and contradictions of former accounts, I apply to the squire and parson of the parish; hoping, from men of their more enlarged notions, to have my curiosity fully satisfied. Their tales are more plausible, but still defective, and differ, in several particulars, from each other. I find myself, therefore, obliged to sit down in the dark, and go in search of other objects of curiosity somewhere else. But, wherever I go, I often meet with the same disappointments.

That this might sometimes be the fate of a traveller in England, or, indeed, in any other country, none, I believe, will pretend to doubt. Were I, therefore, inclined to revenge my frustrated inquiries, by making use of the Doctor's illiberal pencil, it would be easy to delineate the English character in the same unfavourable colours. I am sure, in doing so, I should do the people of that country much injustice; but I should have exactly the same reasons for charging them, in the lump, with ignorance and a dis-

regard to truth. Because every man I met with could not answer every question I chose to put to him, I might pronounce them all a nation of blockheads. And because different men differed a little sometimes in their relations of facts, I might say, with the same peremptory assurance as hath been said by our author above, that 'such is the laxity of' English 'conversation, that the inquirer is kept in continual suspense, and by a kind of intellectual retrogradation, knows less as he hears more.'

Besides, it deserves to be considered, that many of those whom the Doctor thought proper to interrogate, might not have English enough to understand his questions, or return distinct answers; that others might not be competent judges of the subjects proposed to them, and consequently might give defective or erroneous accounts, from a too forward zeal to oblige a stranger as far as they were able; and, likewise, that, even among the higher and more intelligent ranks of people, it was weak and absurd to expect a uniformity of narration. Men, according to their opportunities, derive their knowledge from different sources. Authors themselves are not always agreed in their communications upon the same topics. We cannot therefore suppose that their readers will think alike.

A judicious author would have attended to these things, to avoid the imputation of malice or folly to himself. When a man attempts to traduce a whole people, he ought to stand upon firm ground. But here, amidst a number of bold assertions, there is not a single fact produced, which will not apply to any spot on the face of the earth, as well as to the Highlands of Scotland. By endeavouring to prove too much, therefore, the Doctor proves nothing; as such indiscriminate abuse can never obtain credit, even with the most credulous. The excess of his rancour has effectually defeated its own purpose; and he is literally in the situation of those reptiles, which, as naturalists tell us, are sometimes poisoned by their own stings.

As the Doctor acknowledges he was every where hospitably received by the Highlanders, let the world judge of the man, by this sample of his gratitude for their civilities. To search for information among the lower orders of the people, to tamper with their simplicity, to lie in wait for their answers, and catch at every trifling incoherence in their discourse, was, beyond description, mean and ungenerous. But to do all this with the insidious purpose of retailing their crude opinions to the public, as the standard of all Highland learning and science, is a species of literary

assassination, with which the world was not acquainted before the Doctor published his Journey.

There is one excuse, however, for this part of our author's conduct, and that is, that it was unavoidable. He had one favourite purpose to serve, of which I shall take notice in its proper place; and to pave the way for that, it was necessary to discredit all Highland narration. When the Doctor has an object in view, nothing must stand in his way; he goes on with giant strides. Probability, truth, and decorum, must yield to his stubborn resolution, and all be sacrificed to his insolence, caprice or disgust. When his prejudices operate, we look in vain for those restraints, either from shame or virtue, which regulate the writings of others. He can be absurd without a blush, and unjust without remorse.

Before I dismiss this article, I will just take notice of, what one would least expect, an inaccuracy in the Doctor's language. In the passage last quoted, he says he was told, 'that a brogue-maker was a trade.' He certainly meant to have said, that brogue-making was a trade. This, however, is but a trifling slip of his pen, and the mere effect of inadvertency; nor do I mention it with any design to make it an object of criticism.

I wish the same innocent carelessness could be pleaded for more material mistakes.

Page 75, in speaking of the garb act, he says, 'the same poverty that made it then difficult for them to change their clothing, hinders them now from changing it again.' The truth is, however, that an attachment to their ancient garb made the first change disagreeable, and not willingly complied with; and a second change, at the time alluded to, was still prevented by a British act of parliament, which the Doctor seems willing to overlook, that he might have an opportunity, according to his usual candour, of assigning a more favourable reason of his own.

Page 76, he says, 'the summer can do little more than feed itself, and winter comes with its cold and its scarcity upon families very slenderly provided.' As the Doctor never spent a winter in the Hebrides, it is somewhat extraordinary, how he should pretend to know so much of the distresses of that season. But those who have passed what he calls 'the dark months' in those parts, could tell a very different tale. A particular provision must be made for the winter every where; and that, together with what the summer can spare, and which greatly exceeds what the Doctor would insinuate, makes the short days.

in the Hebrides, as comfortable as any part of the year.

In page 77 he proceeds to observe, 'It is incredible how soon the account of any event is propagated in these narrow countries by the love of talk, which much leisure produces, and the relief given to the mind in the penury of insular conversation by a new topic. The arrival of strangers at a place so rarely visited, excites rumour, and quickens curiosity. I know not whether we touched at any corner, where fame had not already prepared us a reception.' Here it is to be observed, that the hospitality and civility which have been universally allowed to predominate among Highlanders, since the first accounts we have had of them, are excluded from any share in their desire of seeing strangers. He says, curiosity was their chief motive. This may pass well enough with the superficial; but with more observant readers it will not do, as he unluckily tells us, in page 158, that the same people are totally void of curiosity.

Page 79, he says, in 'the islands, there are no houses where travellers are entertained for money.' This, I suppose, he would reckon no great disappointment. He had occasion to expend but very little money in Scotland; and that little he always mentions with regret. But did he inquire for inns

at Broad-ford, Port Re, or Dunvegan? I apprehend not. He knew he might have found them there; and so he did not choose to hazard the question, as he wished to have an apology for living in a more private and less expensive manner. With his usual inconsistency, however, he acknowledges, in page 99, that he dined at a public-house.

Page 85, he tells us, that the 'military ardour' of the Highlanders 'is extinguished.' I should be glad to know upon what the Doctor founds this assertion. The contrary is so universally acknowledged, that few of his own countrymen, I believe, will allow it to be just. The last war bears ample testimony to their valour, and proves that they still retain the spirit of their ancestors. The successes of that glorious period have been ascribed, in a great measure, to their bravery. Prince Ferdinand has distinguished them by public thanks in the field. Every other General under whom they served has been lavish in encomiums on their courage, and the uncommon intrepidity of their behaviour. The British senate itself has recorded their praises. And in particular the panegyric of Mr. Pitt, spoken in the House of Commons a little before he was created Earl of Chatham, is a monument to their military fame,

which defies the impudent but feeble attacks of a pedant's envy and malice.

In the same page he says, 'Of what they' (the Highlanders) 'had before the late conquest of their country, there remain only their language and their poverty.' What he here dignifies with the name of conquest, is the defeat of a few rebels at Culloden. Because a handful of malecontents, who had taken up arms, were routed and dispersed, is the Doctor hardy enough to call that a national conquest? The general loyalty of the Scotch at that time, rendered a general conquest as unnecessary as a general resistance would have rendered it impracticable. But this is much of a piece with his Cromwellian conquest, which has been already disproved. It is truly pitiable to find a man of his years, and reputed erudition, so blinded by prejudice, as gravely to advance for facts what the most illiterate cannot believe, and every schoolboy could confute.

He takes every opportunity to inculcate the poverty of the Scotch. This seems to be a *rich* topic to him; and, without it, I know not how he could have eked out his work. It is so often obtruded upon the reader, and that too when he would least expect it, that one must naturally think there was a want of other matter. When, therefore, he labours most to prove their poverty

as a people, he infallibly proves his own as an author, at the same time.

He introduces this subject very unnecessarily, as usual, in the last quotation. I shall just contrast what he says there with some other passages from himself, and leave the reader to draw his own inference. At the beginning of page 81, he says, 'he that shall complain of his fare in the Hebrides, has improved his delicacy more than his manhood.' In page 82, the breakfast is 'a meal in which the Scots, whether of the lowlands or mountains, must be confessed to excel us. The tea and coffee are accompanied not only with butter, but with honey, conserves, and marmalades. If an epicure could remove by a wish, in quest of sensual gratifications, wherever he had supped, he would breakfast in Scotland.' Page 83, 'A dinner in the Western Islands differs very little from a dinner in England.'

Here we have the most undoubted proofs not only of plenty, but of elegance. What now is become of that poverty into which the Doctor had so unmercifully plunged us but a little ago? His charity has at length prevailed; and the same hand that had sunk us so low, has raised us at once to affluence. When a man is so much at variance with himself, the least we can say is, that his testimony can have but little effect. But, as

I have promised, I will not take up time in pointing out inconsistencies, which cannot escape the most careless observer.

Page 85, he says, 'a longer journey than to the Highlands must be taken by him whose curiosity pants for savage virtues and barbarous grandeur.' As the Doctor, in many places before, had so liberally bestowed the epithets rude, savage, and barbarous upon the Highlanders, one would think, from the softening strain of this passage, that our traveller, after a more intimate acquaintance with them, had found reason to alter his style, and consequently that there would be a truce with scurrilities for the future. But many of the following pages will show, that there is no such reformation in the Doctor's language. This is but a short suspension, not an entire cessation, of obloquy and abuse. He only elevates a little, to make the fall the greater; and his compliments, like the tears of the crocodile, are but a deceitful prelude to an approaching sacrifice.

Page 100, our traveller comes to Dunvegan, where, he says, he was agreeably entertained by Lady Macleod, who had resided many years in England, and 'knew all the arts of southern elegance, and all the modes of English economy.' This manner of accounting for the goodness of his reception is, at best, but a bad compliment to

that lady, as old England is made to run away with more than half the praise.

But there is something as nationally invidious in the above remark, as it is indelicate to Lady Macleod. It certainly is intended to insinuate, that he had found the bulk of our Scotch-bred ladies deficient in point of accomplishments. If he did not mean this much, I should be glad to know what he meant by so improper an introduction of a long residence in England, to set off Lady Macleod's character. Had he already forgot the ladies of Raasay, whom he had left but a day or two before, and whom he often mentions in a manner that seems to render a residence in England nowise necessary for attaining all the arts of elegance, and the modes of a perfect economy? But his own words will make the best comment upon this subject. In finishing his description of Raasay, he says, page 98, 'Such a seat of hospitality, amidst the winds and waters, fills the imagination with a delightful contrariety of images. Without is the rough ocean and the rocky land, the beating billows and the howling storm: within is plenty and elegance, beauty and gaiety, the song and the dance.'

Page 102, 'a Highland laird,' he says, 'made a trial of his wife for a certain time, and if she did not please him, he was then at liberty to send her

away.' As there never was a law in Scotland authorising such a custom, the Doctor should have told us where he had made this wonderful discovery. He gives one instance, indeed, of a gentleman sending back his wife to her friends; and most other countries, I believe, could furnish many; but the bad consequences of the feud occasioned, on this account, between the two different clans, even as related by himself, is sufficient to prove, that the practice could never have been common. There is such an unfortunate contrariety in most of the Doctor's narratives, that he generally furnishes an antidote against the poison which he means to communicate.

Page 102, he talks of people 'lying dead by families as they stood.' Lying as they stood is a mode of expression which none but a Lexicographer, who can give to words what meaning he pleases, would venture to put upon paper. It would appear, from this accurate phrase, as if the Doctor intended to enrich the English language by supplies from the Irish establishment.

From an anxiety to annihilate, if possible. every vestige of antiquity in the Highlands, he is at much pains, in pages 106, 107, 108, to explain away a *dun*, or Danish fort, of which there are many in the country, into a fence for securing cattle from thieves. This attempt is the more

chimerical and absurd, as it cannot be conceived how so small an area, though much larger than he makes it, could contain such a number of cattle as would compensate the trouble of rearing it; and which, according to his own account of the matter, must have been very great.

The dimensions of this building, as stated by Dr. Johnson, are very erroneous. He says the area is but forty-two feet in diameter, and the height of the wall only about nine; but the fact is, that the former is seventy-two feet, and the latter about fifteen and upwards. So small a space, at best, could not have answered the purpose assigned to it by the Doctor; but, according to his own measure, it would have been altogether useless. In those pastoral times, it could not contain the cattle of a single individual, who was of consequence enough to raise such a fabric; much less could it afford shelter for the stock of a whole clan, or a country.

The height is another argument against the Doctor's hypothesis. Even the nine feet, which he allows, were by far too much for a mere fence from thieves; as the half of that would have been fully sufficient. He is apt enough, at other times, to accuse the Highlanders of laziness and poverty. How, then, will he be able to account for so great a superfluity of labour and expense, when, instead

of nine feet, the height is, at least, fifteen? A direct answer to this question must puzzle even Dr. Johnson; and it would certainly put any other man, in the same situation, to something more than a difficulty—it would put him to the blush.

'The walls,' he says, 'are very thick.' This likewise is against him, as a moderate degree of thickness would have been sufficient to resist the sudden incursions of freebooters. They never carried any levelling instruments, and they generally remained too short a time to overcome the strength of very thick walls by manual force alone.

Another, and perhaps not the least forcible objection to our author's idea, is, that he tells us, 'within the great circle were several smaller rounds of wall, which formed distinct apartments.' Ingenuity itself must be at a loss to conceive how such a contrivance as this could have been devised for the more convenient stowage of cattle. But Dr. Johnson saves his reader the trouble of thinking long about the matter, and solves the difficulty by saying, that these interior apartments, 'were probably the shelters of the keepers.' This, I think, settles the point at once. For, if the whole of the great circle is subdivided into a number of smaller chambers, which were occupied by the keepers, it is evident there could be no room for

the cattle. The Doctor has with one stroke of his pen overturned his own system, and clearly proved against himself, that the duns, or towers, so frequent in the islands, were intended as shelters for men, and not for beasts.

Had he acquiesced in the natural account of this matter, which, he says, was given him by Mr. Macqueen, it would have saved him all the trouble of framing an opinion of his own, as well as the ridicule of being at length obliged to abandon it as untenable.

The antiquity of those buildings cannot be exactly known; but it is highly probable that they are of Danish origin. They might have been used partly as fortresses, and partly as signal-houses, from which the *gok-man*, which in the Danish language signifies a signal-man, generally gave the alarm, and announced the approach of strangers either by sea or land.

Page 113, he says, the seas are commonly too rough in winter for nets, or boats, so that the inhabitants cannot fish. This assertion seems the more extraordinary, as he had said before, page 103, that while he was in the Hebrides, though the wind was extremely turbulent, he had never seen very high billows. Here, however, he had a hypothesis to support. He wanted to have another stroke at the poverty of the inhabitants; and

therefore he found it necessary to make the sea stormy, that by depriving them of fish he might create a famine, as he flatly says, that other provision fails at that season. When the good Doctor has a point of this nature to carry, he laughs at the restrictions of consistency and common sense.

Page 117, we find the Doctor at Ostig in Skye, where he was hospitably entertained for some days by Mr. Martin Macpherson, minister of Slate, and son to the late reverend and learned Dr. John Macpherson, formerly minister of the same parish.

As our traveller was now upon the spot where Dr. Macpherson had so long resided, and where he had so successfully employed his talents as a writer, one might naturally expect that he would have taken some opportunity of mentioning so distinguished a character with respect. By such a tribute to the memory of the father, he would have repaid the hospitality of the son in the most agreeable manner; while, at the same time, by doing justice to another's merit, he would have given a generous proof of his own candour and impartiality.

But, instead of that, the Doctor chooses to be silent; and we hear not a single word of Dr. Macpherson or his writings. This must certainly be owing to one or other of these causes, or to both; either to the jealousy of a little mind, which is

incapable of conferring praise; or to our traveller's unwillingness to inform the public, that an author of such eminent abilities was a native of the Highlands.

Among other things, Dr. Macpherson had written professedly, and in a masterly manner, on the antiquities of his country: not from that tradition, which Dr. Johnson explodes, but, to use one of our traveller's expressions, from the 'uncontaminated fountains of Greek and Roman literature.' Where tradition completed the figure, of which the ancients drew the outlines, Dr. Macpherson paid it that attention which it claims from writers whose object is truth; where it differed from incontestible authorities, he rejected it with proper contempt.

But it was not convenient for Dr. Johnson's plan to mention even the name of a native of the Highlands, whose knowledge as a scholar, and elegance as an author, reflected so much honour on his country. As our dogmatical journalist wished to draw a veil over the history of our country, as well as over the genius of our countrymen, it would have been a species of literary suicide to have taken any notice of a writer whose industry and talents have placed the existence and truth of both beyond dispute. The directing his readers to Dr. Macpherson's works, would infalli-

bly pull down the fabulous fabric which Dr. Johnson intended to raise; and we must, therefore, commend his prudence, whilst we exclude him from every pretence to candour.

Let me, therefore, tell the Doctor, that he would have done much greater justice to the public, as well as to Scotland, if, instead of trusting to his own ingenuity in many things, he had related the opinions of Dr. Macpherson and others. A few anecdotes from those authors would have been full as valuable to the purchasers of his book, as telling them, that, one day, Mr. Boswell borrowed a boy's fishing-rod and caught a cuddy; with a thousand other impertinent trifles of the same nature.

Page 122, in speaking of minerals, he says, 'Common ores would be here of no great value; for what requires to be separated by fire, must, if it were found, be carried away in its mineral state, here being no fuel for the smelting-house or forge.' If this be true, how happens it that several English companies come to different parts of the West coast for charcoal, and bring ore all the way from England to be there smelted? Besides, it is well known that there is pitcoal in Mull; and, I am told, it is likewise to be had in one or more of the other islands.

Immediately after, he adds, 'Perhaps, by dili-

gent search in this world of stone, some valuable species of marble might be discovered. But neither philosophical curiosity, nor commercial industry, have yet fixed their abode here.' Had our doughty itinerant himself carried any reasonable share of 'philosophical curiosity' along with him, he might have observed abundance of white marble near Coriatachan, where he acknowledges he had been twice.

Page 123, he says, 'the cattle go from the islands very lean, and are not offered to the butcher till they have been long fatted in English pastures.' The cattle that are sent from the islands are not generally so very lean when they set out, but they naturally become so before they are driven six or seven hundred miles. Were the fattest bullocks in England to travel in the same manner to the islands, they would probably not be very fit for being offered to the butcher when they arrived there. If the Doctor doubts the fact, let him drive a live stock before him, when he sets out on his next journey, and I will be answerable for the consequence.

Page 136. 'The inhabitants,' says he, 'were for a long time, perhaps, not unhappy; but their content was a muddy mixture of pride and ignorance, an indifference for pleasures which they did not know, a blind veneration for their chiefs, and

a strong conviction of their own importance.' It may with more truth be said, that this observation is a muddy mixture of a still less honourable pride and more contemptible ignorance; a total indifference for truth, if the contrary can but serve the turn; a blind prejudice against the whole Scottish nation; and a strong conviction in the author's own mind, that he has here, as on many other occasions, most infamously and grossly misrepresented them.

As to our pride, he says in the same page, 'Their pride has been crushed by the heavy hand of a vindictive conqueror.' This is another retrospect to the year 1745. If ever the saying, that "Old men are twice children," was verified by example, it is certainly on the present occasion. The peevish veteran has once taken into his head to say, that the Scotch were then conquered, and he must be allowed to say so still, or there can be no peace with him. He therefore diverts himself with sounding the horn of victory, as an overgrown lubberly boy would be pleased with the noise of his rattle, or the blowing of his whistle.

I have already endeavoured to place this matter in its proper light. I shall now borrow a little of the Doctor's own assistance to strengthen my arguments. Page 137, he says, 'To disarm part of the Highlands, could give no reasonable occasion

of complaint. Every government must be allowed the power of taking away the weapon that is lifted against it. But the loyal clans murmured, with some appearance of justice, that, after having defended the king, they were forbidden for the future to defend themselves; and that the sword should be forfeited, which had been legally employed. Their case is undoubtedly hard,' &c.

Whoever reads this passage will require little further proof, that the idea of a national conquest is most absurd, and that the Doctor himself has furnished a decisive argument against it. After this concession, could any one expect to hear him say in the very same page, 'But the law, which followed the victory of Culloden, found the whole nation dejected and intimidated?' He tells us in one place, that there were loyal clans, and that they defended the king. What occasion then had the whole nation to be dejected and intimidated, unless we can suppose that near two millions of people, who were innocent, were to be involved in the guilt of a few thousands? Such barefaced contradictions are an answer to themselves.

But let me tell the Doctor, that without the assistance of the loyal clans he mentions, the victory of Culloden had never been heard of. Had he known, or rather adverted to this, I am persuaded he would have been at less pains to cele-

brate an event, wherein the Scotch themselves had more than an equal share.

The rebellion of 1745 was only a partial insurrection of a few discontented chiefs and their followers. Neither were those gentlemen the heads of the most numerous clans; nor did the whole of their respective tribes attend them to the field. Only nine parishes in the Highlands contributed a part of their inhabitants towards furnishing the rebel army. It would seem, however, that Dr. Johnson's fears, and probably the fears of those about him at that time, had magnified the danger to a very high degree; and that may be one reason for his exalting the suppression of an inconsiderable tumult into a splendid victory. If the Doctor is not ashamed to confess his own panic, he ought not, for decency's sake, to have exposed that of his country.

That the insurgents met with little encouragement in Scotland, is evident. Their whole number amounted hardly to seven thousand; and of these about two thousand were English. That a much greater proportion of our southern neighbours did not repair to the same standard, was by no means owing to their possessing a greater share of loyalty. The disaffection of most of their leading men, and the measures they had concerted, are well known.

they only waited for some favourable moment to declare their intentions; in which, it must be allowed, they showed themselves much more prudent, if less resolute, than the Scotch.

He goes on to discuss what he had asserted in page 136, as above quoted. Having crushed our pride 'by the heavy hand of a vindictive conqueror,' in the manner we have seen, he comes next to expose rather than to commiserate our ignorance.

Page 137, he says, 'Their ignorance grows every day less, but their knowledge is yet of little other use than to show them their wants.' As to the first part of this pompous apophthegm, that our 'ignorance grows every day less,' I shall only observe, that if the same thing cannot be said of our friends the English, they must be a much duller people than I ever took them for. In regard to the second, he gives our knowledge its proper use. When people find out their wants, they will soon fall upon means to supply them. From the parade which accompanies this piece of intelligence, one would be apt, at first sight, to expect a great deal from it; but, when we examine it more narrowly, we shall find it only informs us, that as our knowledge becomes greater, our ignorance grows less.

But to be a little more serious with the Doctor,

let me ask him, in what that ignorance consisted, which is so miraculously growing less, by our learning to know more?

He seems to connect it with what he calls 'an indifference for pleasures which we did not know.' Does he mean the fashionable pleasures of the English metropolis? If he does, he has, at last, paid us no small compliment. To make frequent vows at the shrine of the voluptuous goddess, is no great sign of the wisdom of any people. The puny size and meagre form which mark out her votaries, afford no great temptation to follow their example.

I would gladly hope, however, that Dr. Johnson is not a serious advocate for intemperate pleasures; as it would give me a much worse opinion of his morals, at least, than I would wish to entertain. Though he has been a Rambler in his younger days, he would certainly cut a bad figure as an old rake. To say no worse, it would be ridiculous in the extreme to see such an aggregate of unfashioned matter tottering, with paralytic stride. after sensual gratifications, and awkwardly assuming the light airs of modern libertinism."

I have already given several proofs that the Scotch were not behind their neighbours, either in useful or ornamental improvements, many centuries ago. I will now mention some other cir-

cumstances, to show that the Doctor's charge of what he calls ignorance cannot apply to those times. To give his assertion weight, therefore, he ought to have told us when this national misfortune commenced, and wherein it now consists; for it must appear somewhat unaccountable, that the Scotch, who had once their full proportion of the improvements commonly known in Europe, should have made a retrograde motion, while other nations have been in a progressive state.

As to the state of learning among us, we have already seen how that matter stood in very early times. In particular, it has appeared from history, that St. Aidan and others were sent from Scotland, in the seventh century, to instruct some of the Doctor's countrymen in the first principles of Christianity. In succeeding times it must be allowed, that learning had considerably declined among our ancestors; but, even in that respect, the Scotch had only their share of the same Gothic cloud which, for a season, darkened the face of all Europe. This misfortune was owing every where to the Roman Catholic clergy, with whom it was an established maxim, that "Ignorance was the mother of Devotion." In mentioning the effect, therefore, the Doctor should have assigned the cause; but as that could not be done without a just censure on his favourite sect, he chooses to

leave it behind the curtain. He takes such frequent opportunities of extolling the piety of monks, priests, and cardinals, that the dullest of his readers may easily discover his attachment to their tenets.

In regard to such arts and manufactures as were then commonly known over Europe, there are many proofs to show, that they were anciently cultivated, not only in Scotland at large, but even in the Hebrides, in as great perfection as any where else. As to the islands in particular, I might venture to assert, that some ingenious arts, which were well understood by our forefathers, are now in a great measure lost, from that change in our modes of life which time and circumstances have introduced. This may appear a paradox to the Doctor, and perhaps to some others; but I should find no difficulty in proving it to be true, if such a discussion should appear to be necessary.

That a knowledge of the several arts must have been very generally disseminated over the Highlands, there can be no reason to doubt. It is well known that our kings resided often in that part of their dominions, as at Dunstaffnage, Dunmacsnichain or Berigonium, Inverlochy, Inverness, and Logirate, &c. It is natural, therefore, to suppose, that they had at all those places a number of artists

of all kinds, becoming their state and quality; and likewise, that the skill and knowledge of these men must necessarily be communicated to others. Several of the castles and magnificent palaces wherein the kings resided are still to be seen, though our traveller seems to have been determined to take no notice of them.

But though no king of Scotland had ever resided in the Highlands, our several chieftains lived in all the state of independent princes. Like the feudal lords of all other countries, they were often at variance with some of their neighbours; and that rendered it absolutely necessary, that they should be provided with the means of every species of accommodation, either for peace or war, within their own territories. This is another undeniable proof, that a very large proportion of the Highlanders must have been well skilled in the different arts.

There are yet many monuments of ancient masonry among us, of different kinds, which greatly excel any thing of that nature in modern times. The curious hieroglyphics on some of our tombs deserved particular notice, though Dr. Johnson passes over them in silence. Among other things, the huge masses of stone set up in druidical circles, particularly those supported upon other stones for

druidical altars, and the obelisks erected in commemoration of battles, are demonstrable proofs of our knowledge of mechanics.

Many monuments of this kind are still to be seen, not only upon the continent or mainland of Scotland, but likewise in the islands; though many others, within the memory of some people still living, have been destroyed to make way for the plough, or by other accidents. In particular, at Inverliver on the side of Lochete, at Glencetlen in Glenete, in different parts in Isla, and at Callanis and Barvas in the island of Lewis, there are masses of such enormous size and weight, as could not be raised by any number of men that could stand round them. Clachan-an-Truiseil near Barvas, particularly, is from two to two and a half feet thick, six feet broad, and from seventeen to eighteen feet above ground. As the stone stands in a peat-moss, or bog, there can be no less than a third part of it under ground; and it is probable there may be more. There are no stones or quarry of the same kind nearer to it than the seaside, from which it stands about half a mile, on the ascent of a steep hill, and having a deep bog between.

In the island called from O'Chormaic, on the coast of Knapdale, and I think on the north-east side, there is a small commodious harbour, a great part of which is surrounded with a wall or quay,

extremely well built; and the foundation of it is so deep, that it cannot be seen even at low water. What is remarkable of this is, that it is so old that no one pretends to know, even by tradition, when or by whom it was built.

The Fletchers of Glenlyon, in Perthshire, were the most famous arrow-makers of their time, so long as that weapon continued to be used.

The smelting and working of iron was well understood, and constantly practised, over all the Highlands and islands for time immemorial. Instead of improving in that art, we have fallen off exceedingly of late years, and at present make little or none. Tradition bears, that they made it in the blomary way; that is, by laying it under the hammers, in order to make it malleable with the same heat that melted it in the furnace.

There is still in the Highlands a clan of the name of Macnuithear, who are descended from those founders, and have from thence derived their surname. I am likewise well informed, that there is in Glenurchy, in Argyleshire, a family of the name of Macnab, who have lived in the same place, and have been a race of smiths, from father to son, for more, perhaps, than three hundred years past; and who, in consequence of the father having instructed the son, have carried down so much of their ancient art, that they excel all others in the

country, in the way of their profession; even those taught in the south of Scotland, as well as in England, not excepted. A tinker or smith of the name of Macfeadearan, a tribe now almost extinct, was the most famous of his time for making arrow-heads.

It is certain that Macdonald was formerly possessed of most of the western isles, as well as of several large districts upon the continent or mainland. He had many places of residence, such as Ardtorinish, &c.; but the most common one was in an island in Lochfinlagan in Isla. Near this place, and not far from Port Askaic on the sound of Isla, lived the smith Maccregie, (that is, the son of the rock,) and his posterity for a great length of time. There is still pointed out, by the inhabitants, the rock out of which he dug his iron ore. Near the rock is a large solid stone, of a very hard consistency, on which he knapped his ore; and, at a little distance, there is a cascade on a rivulet, where stood his mill for polishing, or otherwise preparing the iron which he had manufactured. Here he and his descendents made complete suits of armour, according to the fashion of the times; such as helmets, swords, coats of mail, &c. The Isla hilt for the broadsword is well known, and so famous as to have become proverbial.

As to our navigation, there is reason to believe

that it bore a near proportion to that of our neighbours: sea-engagements with birlins were very common in the Highlands till of late. Lymphad, or galley, was the same with longh-fhad (long-ship), or birlin.

There was a ship of war built in Scotland, in the minority of James the Fourth, the equal of which had never been built in Britain, nor seen upon the seas in those times. Its dimensions I am not just now able to ascertain; but they have been accurately described by several of our historians, whom I have not at present an opportunity of consulting. *

* "In the same yeir (1511) the king buildit a great schipe called the Micheall, quhilk was ane verrie monstruous great schip, for this schip tuik so meikle timber, that schoe wasted all the woodis in Fyfe except Falkland wood, by the timber that cam out of Norway. For many of the schipwrightis in Scotland wrought at hir, and wrichtis of vther countries had thair devyse at hir; and all wrought bussilie the space of ane yeir at hir. This schip was twelff scoir footis lenth; threttie sax foott within the wallis: schoe was ten foot thik within the wallis of cutted risles of oak, so that no cannon could doe at hir. shoe cumbred all Scotland to gett hir to the sea: and when shoe was committed to the sea, and vnder saill, she was counted to the king to fourtie thousand pund of expensis, by hir ordouris and cannones quhilkis shoe bair. Shoe had thrie hunder marineris to governe hir; sixscoir guneris to vse her artaillarie, and ane thousand men of warre, by captanes, skipperis, and quarter maisteris. Quhen this schip past to the sea, and was lying in the road, the king caused shott ane cannon at hir, to essay hir if shoe was wight, bot the cannon deired

In 1490, Andrew Wood, with two Scotch ships, took five ships belonging to the English, though much superior to his own in size. With the same two ships he afterwards took three English ships, the best that could be picked out of Henry the Eighth's whole fleet, and equipped for the purpose. They were commanded by Stephen Bull, as admiral, the only man in England that could be found to undertake the expedition; and they had the further advantage of being clean out of the dock, while Wood had been some time upon a cruise on the coast of Holland, and totally ignorant of the trap that was intended for him on his return.

From this the Doctor may perceive, that we could and did cope with the formidable fleets of England, and even obtained signal advantages over them, at a time long prior to that in which he continues to represent us as a nation of ignorant savages and barbarians.

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hir not. And if any man beleives that this schip was not as we have schowin, latt him pas to the place of Tullibardyne, quhair he will find the breadth and lenth of hir sett with hawthorne: as for my author was Captane Andro Wood, principall captane of hir, and Robert Bartane, who was maister skipper. This schip lay still in the road, and the king tuik great pleasour everie day to cum doun and sie her, and would dyne and sup in hir sundrie tymes, and be showing his lordis hir ordour and munitioun." Lindsay's Chronicles of Scotland, vol. i. p. 256. *Editor.*

With respect to carpentry, or joiner's work, we have still many specimens, in oak, of very high antiquity, which greatly excel any thing that is done by modern artists.

Our shields, or targets, likewise, consisting of wood, leather, and often a plate of steel, with regularly placed and polished brass studs, which sometimes formed different figures and representations of things, prove, beyond a doubt, that we had people very early who could work with dexterity in a variety of materials.

Many more instances might be given, but those above, I flatter myself, will be sufficient to convince the Doctor, though perhaps he may not confess it, that such arts as were known to other nations, were not at any period of time unknown in Scotland. The English are but too apt to claim a superiority, in most things, over all their neighbours; but we know perfectly well, that they can boast but of few inventions, and that they are not over remarkable for making quick improvements on the inventions of others. But I wish not, by any means, to launch into general reflections, for the indiscretion of Dr. Johnson and a few others.

We are fully satisfied ourselves, and so, we hope, are others, that it is not our ignorance or want of genius that has brought such a deluge of falsehood and abuse upon us from our worthy traveller. It

is something else, which he himself thinks the reverse of these, that has provoked so much asperity; and we hope we shall always continue to furnish him with the same reasons for jealousy and detraction. We wish not that Dr. Johnson should ever speak of us in a different style. As his pride and envy know no bounds, he is seldom obliging where others would confer applause. His censure, therefore, implies a claim to merit.

In a long string of quaint axioms, he tells us, page 140, 'that the martial character cannot prevail in a whole people, but by the diminution of all other virtues.' By this, he endeavours to rob the Highlanders of every thing that is valuable, but their bravery. He could devise no means to deprive them of that, and therefore he was resolved to leave them no other qualification. But, in aiming this thrust at the Scotch, he seems not aware what a deep wound he gives to old England at the same time. His own countrymen will not easily give up their claim to the martial character; and yet, I believe, they would not choose to confirm the Doctor's reasoning, by renouncing their pretensions to all other virtues. The French, Germans, and Swiss, are all allowed to possess the martial character; but their politeness, humanity, and other virtues, cannot be called in question. Among individuals, it has commonly been observed,

that the most cowardly were always the most cruel and barbarous. I thought likewise that the same maxim had been established in regard to nations; and I must think so still, till something stronger has appeared against it than has been advanced by Dr. Johnson. When a man is at variance with the common sense of mankind, his opinions may, at first, surprise a little by their novelty; but the surprise excited by impudent singularity is soon followed by contempt.

In the same page he says, 'Every provocation was revenged with blood, and no man that ventured into a numerous company, by whatever occasion brought together, was sure of returning without a wound.' What the Doctor says here is, so far, very right. No man certainly could be sure of any thing that was to happen, without the gift of prescience; but there was a much greater probability of a man returning safe, in the case he states, than that an inhabitant of London, after going to bed, shall not have his house robbed, or his throat cut, before next morning.

Different interests, as happened in all other countries, under the feudal institution, made different clans sometimes interfere with one another. The same causes, I believe, are attended with similar effects in most parts of England, even in this refined age. There are few contested elections, I

am told, without producing tumult, disorder, danger, and sometimes death. In regard to those of the same clan, at the time alluded to, they not only lived peaceably together, but likewise in the most friendly manner; and generally with less design upon each other than, I am afraid, is to be found among some people who consider themselves as much more civilized. Were the Doctor's representation of the country just, it must certainly have been long since depopulated.

Page 141, he says, 'The power of deciding controversies, and of punishing offences, as some such power there must always be, was entrusted to the lairds of the country, to those whom the people considered as their natural judges. It cannot be supposed that a rugged proprietor of the rocks, unprincipled and unenlightened, was a nice resolver of entangled claims, or very exact in proportioning punishment to offences.' To make good his point, the Doctor here takes something for granted.

Why should he suppose the lairds to be unprincipled, though some of them might happen, now and then, to be somewhat unenlightened in the intricate points of law? In matters of equity, which were the only questions that could come before them, and these by a reference from both the parties, a man of a good understanding and

solid sense might not make a bad arbiter; and Highlanders in general have not been reckoned deficient in a reasonable share of sagacity. Those whom the Doctor calls 'nice resolvers of entangled claims,' are often as great confounders of plain cases.

But the Doctor's observations on the mode of distributing justice among the Highlanders must fall to the ground, as they are not founded upon matter of fact. The chiefs never sat as judges, either in civil or criminal cases. The constitution of the Highlands, if the expression may be used, was exactly the same with that of all other countries, where the feudal system of government prevailed. The chief, as proprietor of the land, nominated a judge to decide upon differences between his tenants. In matters of property, there lay an appeal to the King's courts in a regular gradation.

In criminal cases, though the culprit was tried in the district where the crime was committed, a jury was summoned from the whole county, and formed in the same just and unexceptionable manner as is practised at present by the High Court of Justiciary in Scotland. The jurymen did not consist, as I am informed they frequently do in the Doctor's country, of low and unenlightened tradesmen and mechanics. On the contrary, they were men of landed property in the county, all

gentlemen of consequence and consideration, who had a character to lose by any deviation from the established maxims of justice; of which, as they are imprinted on the human mind, the bulk of mankind are judges in every country. The number of the jurymen, likewise, was always greater in Scotland than in England; which was an additional security for justice.

The Doctor makes some amends for what he had so rashly asserted, in the next paragraph. 'When the chiefs,' adds he, 'were men of knowledge and virtue, the convenience of a domestic judicature was great. No long journeys were necessary, nor artificial delays could be practised; the character, the alliances, and interests of the litigants, were known to the court, and all false pretences were easily detected. The sentence, when it was past, could not be evaded; the power of the laird superseded formalities, and justice could not be defeated by interest or stratagem.' Here he speaks with more decency, though he is still wrong in the principle.

Page 143. 'The roads are secure in those places through which, forty years ago, no traveller could pass without a convoy.' To borrow a little of his own polite language, it may justly be said here, that the Doctor is either 'unprincipled' or 'unenlightened.' His information, if he had

any, was certainly very bad; and if he speaks at hazard, the infamy of his misrepresentation is apparent.

I am sorry when the Doctor obliges me to draw comparisons between the two kingdoms; but I must inform him, that the Highlanders never lurked on the public roads to disturb ordinary travellers, like the banditti who at present infest all the roads in England. A robbery or murder was always a rare thing in the Highlands. Even in the rudest times our ancestors disdained such practices; it is not therefore probable, that the present generation should be less civilized than their forefathers.

Whatever hostilities they committed, it was always openly and avowedly; and only by way of reprisal on those with whom they were at enmity. The most polite nations in Europe take still the same advantages, when in a state of war with their neighbours. When therefore two clans were at variance, it might happen, indeed, that those belonging to either of them might sometimes find it convenient to travel in larger parties than usual for security, especially if their route led them near the territories of the other.

If the Doctor's convoy was not of this sort, I am at a loss to find it out. I never heard of any other; and even the necessity of that did not come

so far down as he states it. In any other case, a single traveller might pass from one end of the country to the other unmolested, and with much less danger of insult or depredation than even in Fleet-street, where, I am told, the pure Dr. Johnson has not disdained to fix his abode.

In the very next sentence of the same page, he says, 'All trials of right by the sword are forgotten.' This mode of deciding points of right, would, I confess, have been a reproach to our forefathers, had it been only in use among them. But as the same kind of appeal prevailed in England, and other European countries, at the same time, it is rather somewhat *little* in this *great* man to exhibit that custom now, as a characteristic of the ancient Highlanders.

Page 150, he observes, 'England has for several years been filled with the achievements of seventy thousand Highlanders employed in America. I have heard from an English officer, not much inclined to favour them, that their behaviour deserved a very high degree of military praise; but their number has been much exaggerated. One of the ministers told me, that seventy thousand men could not have been found in all the Highlands, and that more than twelve thousand never took the field.' The number said to have been employed in America, if the Doctor ever heard such a report, was

certainly much exaggerated. No more than about five thousand were employed on the American service; and those were only the Royal Highlanders, with Frazer's and Montgomery's regiments. The former consisted of two battalions of eleven hundred each; and each of the latter had fourteen hundred men. They did not act in a body together; every corps had a separate destination.

Though there were not seventy thousand Highlanders employed in America, nor indeed in the whole service, there were certainly more than that number of men raised in Scotland, during the course of the last war; but a large proportion of these were Lowlanders; and they, likewise, did much honour to the British arms, as well as to their native country. The Doctor, however, makes the Scotch levies all Highlanders, and sends the whole seventy thousand to America, as he could not allow the achievements of which he had heard to five thousand only. This furnishes an equal proof of his admiration and envy.

As the Doctor is never long of one mind, he soon veers about, and reduces his seventy thousand to twelve. He says he was told by one of the ministers, that seventy thousand men could not be found in all the Highlands, and that more than twelve thousand never took the field.

The Doctor, on more occasions than one, seems to have been much indebted to the Scotch clergy for intelligence; at least, he often adduces them as vouchers for what he says. It is remarkable, however, that when he makes use of their testimony for any thing that derogates from the importance of the country, he always conceals their names. This has a very suspicious look, as we have no direction for investigating the fact; and none of those gentlemen can find himself responsible to refute an anonymous charge.

I will allow the Doctor, if he pleases, that seventy thousand men could not easily be found in the Highlands, to enter the service all at one time; and, I believe, it might even distress old England itself to furnish an equal number of efficient recruits on a sudden emergency. But I will deny that no more than twelve thousand Highlanders were employed in our different armies, in the course of the last war; and I will be bold to aver, that no minister ever gave him the information he pretends. There is not a minister in Scotland, much less in the Highlands, but knows the contrary. There were, at one time, fifteen battalions of Highlanders, distinguished by their native dress; which may be reckoned at sixteen thousand men at least: for if two or three of those corps, and I am sure there were no more, fell a little short of

their full complement of a thousand each, all the rest had a surplus much more than sufficient to make up the deficiency.

In this there can be no deception. Whoever has curiosity enough, may have recourse to the War-office for a confirmation of the fact. Besides, it is certain, that many more than the number I have just now mentioned, were dispersed through other regiments, without any external distinction as Highlanders. We had constantly recruiting parties among us, and they seldom beat up without finding volunteers.

Hence we find that our author is not more lucky in the stories which he palms upon others, than in the fidelity of his own observations; but he does not always deal in anonymous authority. He professedly places some things to Mr. Boswell's account, which I am sorry to see. Had I therefore an opportunity of meeting that gentleman, I would certainly ask him, whether his fellow-traveller, Dr. Samuel Johnson, had not taken improper liberties with his name? and if he avowed the facts, I would not hesitate to tell him, that, if he had not ignorance for an excuse, he had shown little regard to candour.

As to the English officer, who professed himself not much inclined to favour the Highlanders, but owned that their behaviour deserved a very

high degree of military praise, the Doctor has done him a kindness in suppressing his name. If known, he could hardly have accounted to the world for so strange an antipathy; and though concealed, if he has lived to see the 'Journey to the Hebrides,' and recollects himself in the above passage, he must feel somewhat awkwardly in his own mind. To avow a dislike, and to acknowledge a claim to praise at the same time, exceeds even the usual extravagance of English prejudice.

Page 153, he says, 'The traveller who comes hither from more opulent countries, to speculate upon the remains of pastoral life, will not much wonder that a common Highlander has no strong adherence to his native soil.' The attachment of Scotchmen in general, and of Highlanders in particular. to their native country, has always been remarkable, even to a degree of enthusiasm; which certainly would not have been the case, were that country as destitute of comfortable enjoyments as the Doctor often represents it. He is here confuted by the general voice of his own countrymen, who daily upbraid the Scotch for their national adherence. His assertion, therefore, must lose credit on both hands. The Highlander will spurn the malignant insinuation with contempt; and no Englishman will believe it.

But as Dr. Johnson will prove the most un-

exceptionable evidence against himself, I shall to this passage oppose another from his own work. When he was leaving Anoch in Glenmollison, where he had stayed a night, and was so much captivated with the genteel appearance and behaviour of his landlord's daughter, he tells us, that their host, when they left his house in the morning, walked by them a great way, and entertained them with conversation both on his own condition and that of the country. 'From him,' continues he, page 52, 'we first heard of the general dissatisfaction (the raising of the rents) which is now driving the Highlanders into the other hemisphere: and when I asked him whether they would stay at home, if they were well treated, he answered with indignation, that no man willingly left his native country.' This, I presume, will be deemed a sufficient comment upon the preceding quotation.

It is not the first time we have seen the Doctor's narrations at cross purposes with each other. We can account for his misrepresentations from his prejudices; his contradictions, however, will require a different solution. A badness of heart may induce a man to calumniate others; but there is a degree of insanity in exposing one's own shame.

Page 158. We have here another of our traveller's inconsistencies. 'The general conversation of the islanders,' says he, 'has nothing particular.

I did not meet with the inquisitiveness of which I have read, and suspect the judgment to have been rashly made.' How will this be reconciled with what he has said before in page 77, where he describes the same people as full of curiosity and of the love of talk?

But the case is so very different from what the Doctor alleges in this place, that the inquisitiveness of the common people in the Highlands has been generally thought to border upon a good-natured kind of officiousness. I do not mention this as a circumstance very much to be applauded; but it is harmless at least, and shows that the Doctor has formed a wrong estimate of that part of their character, if he states the matter as he really found it. Many of them, however, for want of his language, might be unable to express their curiosity, let it be ever so great.

As to the better sort, they were always very delicate in their inquiries, as the Doctor's answers were generally rude and unmannerly. While in the Hebrides, he was for the most part so sulky and ill-humoured, that even their assiduities to please him seemed to give offence. It may naturally be supposed, therefore, that a people always remarkable for their politeness to strangers, would be very shy in obtruding any thing that might prove disagreeable to their guest. When the

Doctor was in a mood for conversation, they heard him with attention, and answered his questions with civility; but, with all that curiosity and love of talk, which he has allowed them in another place, they seldom ventured to solicit him for any information in return. The natural roughness of his manners was sometimes so excessive, that he even treated the ladies with disrespect; and nothing but a regard to the laws of hospitality prevented the gentlemen often from showing marks of their displeasure.

Page 159. 'There are now parochial schools, to which the lord of every manor pays a certain stipend. Here the children are taught to read; but by the rule of their institution, they teach only English, so that the natives read a language which they may never use or understand.' The Doctor undertakes to give too much information for the short stay he made in the Hebrides. The time could not allow a proper investigation of so many particulars, were he more disposed to be faithful in his accounts: and therefore it is no wonder that we so often find him mistaken.

Here he evidently confounds the parochial with the charity schools. The former are provided with salaries in the manner he mentions; but the latter are supported by royal bounty. There has not been a parish in Scotland for some centuries with-

out a parochial school; and every thing within the compass of the master's knowledge, who is always a man of university education, is regularly taught. There is no prohibition against teaching any thing, not even the Gaelic, so much the Doctor's abhorrence, excepted; though, at the same time, that is not a branch of education in those seminaries.

The charity schools are of much later institution; and, being intended originally for the poorer sort, the children pay no fees. The same qualifications are not requisite in the masters of these. They chiefly teach English, writing, and arithmetic; though several of them teach book-keeping likewise in so great perfection as to fit the youth under their care for the counting-house. By their first institution, it is true, they were prohibited to teach the Gaelic; but the impropriety of that prohibition struck the managers so forcibly afterwards, that in their next instructions they altered that clause, and gave orders for teaching it.

In the same page he says, that in Skye 'the scholars are birds of passage, who live at school only in the summer; for in winter provisions cannot be made for any considerable number in one place. This periodical dispersion impresses strongly the scarcity of these countries.' It may with more justice be said, that this account of the matter impresses much more strongly the author's

uniform intention of misrepresenting facts. The very reverse of what he here says is true; for the schools over all the Highlands are much more frequented in winter than in summer. I have already had occasion to mention, that the winter is far from being a season of scarcity in the Hebrides; as the people, by that kind of providence which is common to all mankind, prepare for it in due time. Nor is the absence of several of the scholars in summer owing to the illiberal cause assigned by Dr. Johnson, as affecting the winter. The children of the less opulent sort of people, who are fit for domestic services, are more wanted in that season at home.

Page 160. The islanders, says he, have no 'reason to complain of insufficient pastors; for I saw not one in the islands, whom I had reason to think either deficient in learning, or irregular in life; but found several with whom I could not converse without wishing, as my respect increased, that they had not been presbyterians.' A few lines after he goes on, 'The ministers in the islands had attained such knowledge as may justly be admired in men, who have no motive to study but generous curiosity, or what is still better, desire of usefulness; with such politeness as so narrow a circle of converse could not have supplied, but to minds naturally disposed to elegance.'

Some regard to truth and candour has prevailed for once. But notwithstanding these generous effusions, for which some acknowledgments are due to the Doctor, let me ask him, how this account of the Highland clergy, for their learning and politeness, accords with what he says in page 250, of our Scotch education? Speaking there of the universities of Scotland, he declares, that men bred in them obtain only 'a mediocrity of knowledge between learning and ignorance.' As none of those gentlemen were bred any where else, it will readily occur to the reader, that such opposite accounts of the Highland ministers and the Scotch colleges cannot be both true. He will therefore judge for himself which to reject.

But whatever respect Dr. Johnson had for the ministers as men, he seems to have no charity for them as presbyterians. His confession on that head may serve as a key to many other things, and shows that much justice and impartiality is not to be expected from a man who is not ashamed to own such prejudices. The compliment to the ministers, therefore, ends in a satire upon himself.

In page 161, he says, he 'met with prejudices sufficiently malignant' among the presbyterians, 'but they were prejudices of ignorance.' As he does not specify the nature of those prejudices, no reply can be made. His disposition, I believe, was

sufficiently malignant to have pointed them out, had there been any that could have served his purpose. By being particular, a man assumes an air of truth at least; but a general assertion will not do, at this time of day, from Dr. Johnson. We have already seen too much laxity in his observations to give him credit for more than he is able to render probable, if not to prove. But while the Doctor talks of malignant prejudices among the presbyterians, as being the effects of ignorance, let me civilly ask him, if he must not be suspected of ignorance, to what more dignified cause we are to impute those malignant prejudices of his own, which have disgraced almost every page of his work?

Page 162. 'There is in Scotland, as among ourselves, a restless suspicion of popish machinations, and a clamour of numerous converts to the Romish religion. The report is, I believe, in both parts of the island equally false. The Romish religion is professed only in Egg and Canna, two small islands, into which the Reformation never made its way. If any missionaries are busy in the Highlands, their zeal entitles them to respect, even from those who cannot think favourably of their doctrine.'

We have here a fresh and very striking instance of the Doctor's attachment to the Romish religion.

He affects to disbelieve the reports of numerous converts being made, lest people should take the alarm, and put a stop to the practice; and he concludes the passage with a very curious argument in favour of toleration. No one, I believe, will doubt his respect for popish missionaries; but how their zeal, in propagating their tenets, should entitle them to respect from those who disapprove of them, is something beyond my comprehension.

In confining the Romish religion in the Highlands to Egg and Canna only, he must be either ignorant or insincere. It is somewhat surprising, indeed, that a man, who, as he terms it himself, came purposely 'to speculate upon the country,' should return so very ill-informed in a matter of so much consequence. Had he taken a little more pains, he must have heard, that there were many of the Romish religion in Strath-glass, Brae-mar, Lochaber, and Glengary; and that the inhabitants of Cnoideart, Muideart, Arasaig, Morthair, South Uist, and Barra, in all a vast extent of country, are Roman Catholics almost to a man.

This is a more just state of the fact than what has been given by the Doctor. He will not, I suppose, be displeased to hear it; and I am sorry I cannot help giving him the further pleasure of assuring him, that the Romish religion has been

considerably upon the growing hand in all the three kingdoms for several years past.

Page 163, he says, 'The ancient spirit that appealed only to the sword, is yet among them' (the Highlanders). This surely must appear a bold assertion, after telling us before, in page 85, That the military ardour of the Highlanders was extinguished, and still more directly, in page 143, that 'all trials of right by the sword are forgotten.' When the Doctor has a turn to serve, he throws out at random whatever suits him best; and when another purpose requires a different account of the very same matter, he is not over scrupulous about altering his detail. The poor Highlanders must be moulded into all shapes, to conform with his views. At one time, we see them an abject and dispirited race of men; at another, they swagger in all the savage pride of their 'ancient ferocity.'

When we meet with such gross and palpable contradictions, it would be a mild construction only to suppose that the Doctor sometimes forgets what he has said before. This is as far as charity can go. But the writer who needs our charity is in a more contemptible situation than the wretch who lives by it.

In page 165, our traveller comes to examine the question of the Second Sight; and it is truly

surprising to see with what a credulous weakness he endeavours to defend so visionary an opinion. Other things, which are believed by every man in the country, which are probable in themselves, and are supported by all the evidence that a reasonable man could expect, the Doctor often rejects; but this point, absurd in itself, uncountenanced by any decent authority, and to which only a few of the most ignorant vulgar give the least faith, he maintains with a zeal which shows him to be ashamed of nothing but thinking like other men.

In attempting to define the Second Sight, he seems to be much at a loss. In page 165, he calls it a faculty, 'for power,' he says, 'it cannot be called;' and yet, in page 168, he veers about again, and calls the Second Sight of the Hebrides a power.

If there is any real distinction between a faculty and a power, it would appear, from this variation of language, that the Doctor has not been able to find it out.

His reasonings upon the subject, for they cannot be called arguments, may amuse some readers, but they can convince none. They are too obscure to be understood by the illiterate, and they want strength to impress men of knowledge. But though our peregrinator has not been ashamed to exhibit his own superstitious credulity, it is a daring piece of insolence to introduce the names

of a Bacon and a Bayle to give credit to such ridiculous nonsense.

Such a faculty or power, or whatever the Doctor pleases to call it, must always have depended, if ever it existed, upon some superior agency, and consequently must have been excited at particular times for some good purposes. We can see no adequate reason, therefore, for the Second Sight being local; and still less, if possible, for its being confined to the lower ranks of people. To have answered the intention of such a gift, it ought to have been general,—in China, and at the Land's End, as well as in the Hebrides,—and conferred upon the rich and the learned, as well as upon the poor and the ignorant.

In support of the Second Sight, Dr. Johnson uses only two particular arguments, if they deserve that name, which seem worthy of any notice. In page 168, he says, 'where we are unable to decide by antecedent reason, we must be content to yield to the force of testimony.' This, in general, is certainly a very just observation, and worthy of a better subject. Had the Doctor always applied it in cases where a rational testimony was to be obtained, he would have been entitled to that claim to candour which he has so often forfeited.

His next plea is as follows: in the same page he says, 'By pretension to Second Sight, no profit

was ever sought or gained. It is an involuntary affection, in which neither hope nor fear are known to have any part. Those who profess to feel it do not boast of it as a privilege, nor are considered by others as advantageously distinguished. They have no temptation to feign; and their hearers have no motive to encourage the imposture.'

Here the Doctor is evidently under a very gross mistake. Whatever he may think, if he really writes as he thinks, it is a well known fact, that those who have pretended to the Second Sight always considered it as a peculiar distinction, of which they were not a little vain; and it is no less true, that such as were weak enough to pay any regard to their pretensions were always afraid of offending, and desirous of pleasing them, as believing they had a communication with a superior order of beings. Whether the artful might not find here a temptation for imposture, I shall leave the reader to judge.

If this faculty, power, or affection, had ever any existence, except in the presumption of the designing or the imagination of the credulous, it is now visibly upon the decline, without any loss to the country; and it is to be hoped a few years more will extinguish the very memory of so great a reproach to the human understanding. In proportion as the light of knowledge has dawned upon

mankind, their eagerness for wonders and belief in supernatural endowments have gradually abated. We may, therefore, naturally expect that the Second Sight of the Hebrides, will soon share the same fate with the late witchcrafts of old England.

The Doctor says, that one of the ministers told him that he came to Skye with a resolution not to believe the Second Sight; a declaration which he shows a willingness to censure, as implying an unreasonable degree of incredulity. But as our traveller seems to have gone to Skye with a resolution to believe nothing else, we shall leave the merits of his credulity in this case, and incredulity in all others, with the impartial public.

I shall now dismiss this subject, as unworthy of any further discussion, and permit Dr. Johnson, with all his pretensions to philosophy, to believe the Second Sight as long as he pleases. It is a harmless delusion, and can hurt nobody. Some minds have a stronger propensity to superstition than others; and there is the less reason to be surprised at this instance of it in the Doctor, that I am told he was one of those wise men who sat up whole nights, some years ago, repeating pater-nosters and other exorcisms, amidst a group of old women, to conjure the Cock-lane ghost.

Our traveller next proceeds to other observations. In page 170. he says, 'As there subsists

no longer in the islands much of that peculiar and discriminative form of life, of which the idea had delighted our imagination, we were willing to listen to such accounts of past times as would be given us. But we soon found what memorials were to be expected from an illiterate people, whose whole time is a series of distress; where every morning is labouring with expedients for the evening; and where all mental pains or pleasure arose from the dread of winter, the expectation of the spring, the caprices of their chiefs, and the motions of the neighbouring clans; where there was neither shame from ignorance, nor pride in knowledge; neither curiosity to inquire, nor vanity to communicate.'

Were this representation of the islanders true, it is certainly a very dismal one. But it is always some consolation to the miserable, to find others in no better a situation than themselves. Let us compare this account with what he gives us, a little before, of the human race in general. In page 166, he says, 'Good seems to have the same proportion in those visionary scenes, as it obtains in real life: almost all remarkable events have evil for their basis, and are either miseries incurred, or miseries escaped. Our sense is so much stronger of what we suffer, than of what we enjoy, that the ideas of pain predominate in almost every mind.

What is recollection but a revival of vexations, or history, but a record of wars, treasons, and calamities? Death, which is considered as the greatest evil, happens to all. The greatest good, be it what it will, is the lot but of a part.'

Here is exhibited a picture of human life more ghastly than the Gorgon's head, and sufficient to chill every breast with horror. We may naturally consider the Doctor, while he wrote in this manner, to have been actuated by a deep fit of melancholy and despair; and what he says of the islanders so soon afterwards, seems to have been dictated under the remains of the same gloomy paroxysm. Those who find an exact representation of their own state in the general portrait of misery here given, can have no reason to contemplate the inhabitants of the islands as distinguished by peculiar calamities. But such as can perceive no similitude of themselves in that frightful group, (and it is to be hoped there are many,) will be naturally disposed to make some allowance for an extraordinary dash of colouring in the Doctor's account of the Hebrides.

Though the matter might be suffered to rest here, it may be worth while to examine the rhapsody of our traveller, concerning the islanders. somewhat more minutely. I shall therefore beg the Doctor's leave to analyse that remarkable pa-

ragraph;' that by contrasting its several parts separately, with what he has advanced on other occasions, we may the better determine what degree of credit he can claim from the public. As he is to be weighed in his own balance, he will have himself only to blame, if 'he is found wanting.'

'We soon found what memorials were to be expected from an illiterate people.' His panegyric on the learning and politeness of the Highland clergy has been already observed: in page 79, he acknowledges that he never was in any house of the islands, where he did not find books in more languages than one; adding, in the same page, that 'literature is not neglected by the higher rank of the Hebridians: and, from what he says of the innkeeper at Anoch, and others of the same class, it is evident that he often found an unexpected degree of education in the intermediate spheres of life.

With what confidence then can Dr. Johnson talk of an illiterate people? So indiscriminate a charge is certainly intended to be understood as general; but if there is any truth in himself, it cannot appear to be just. He has admitted learning among the islanders, where a man of sense and candour would expect to find it any where else; and to insinuate that it goes no further, if

that really be his meaning, is but giving a fresh proof of his own absurdity. He has, therefore, no other alternative. He must either stand convicted of insincerity in his accounts of the higher and middle ranks of men, or he must confine the appellation of illiterate to the very lowest of the people. If he chooses the latter, he can derive no great credit from the remark he makes; as it appears from his own words, that it was among this order only that he sought for what he calls memorials.

In that case, it is no great wonder if he was often disappointed. But that can be deemed no peculiar reproach to the inferior inhabitants of the islands, till the Doctor proves that every cottager in England is a man of letters, and capable of satisfying the curiosity of a traveller in the nicest points of inquiry.

'Every morning is labouring with expedients for the evening.' This is a proof of their industry at least, in contradiction to that laziness and aversion to labour, with which the Doctor so often upbraids them in other places. That the time present should labour for the future can appear nothing remarkable, as we generally find it to be the great business of life in every country whatever. We, therefore, can see nothing here to find fault with, unless it be that Dr. Johnson was

angry because those savages and barbarians, as he frequently calls them, were as wise and provident as their neighbours.

'All mental pains or pleasure arise from the dread of winter, the expectation of the spring, the caprices of their chiefs, and the motions of the neighbouring clans.'

There has been occasion to show, more than once, that the winter is not so very dreadful a season in the Hebrides, as our traveller represents it. I shall therefore refer this part of the argument to the reader's recollection of what has been already said.

As to the evils to be apprehended from the caprices of the chiefs, the Doctor himself is kind enough, as on most other occasions, to help me out with an answer. He takes frequent opportunities to observe, that the patriarchal authority of the chiefs is, in a great measure, abolished; but I shall only take notice of what he says in pages 136 and 143.

In the former of these he tells us, that the 'chiefs being now deprived of their jurisdiction, have already lost much of their influence;' and that they are in a fair way of being soon divested of the little that remains. Whether this be true or not, is of little consequence in the present question; it is sufficient to show that the Doctor

is inconsistent with himself.—In the last mentioned page, after comparing the present with ancient times, he says, that now, however, there is 'happily an end to all fear or hope from malice or from favour;' and a little after, that 'the mean are in as little danger from the powerful, as in other places.'

If the Doctor has not been mistaken in these observations, I would ask him, on what foundation he now builds the caprices of the chiefs?

The motions of the neighbouring clans ceased with the jurisdictions and other prerogatives of the chiefs. The Doctor is sufficiently sensible of this change, and is at abundant pains, in other places, to show by what means it was effected; though, in his usual way, having a particular purpose to answer at this time, he is resolved to keep up the old custom.

A passage or two from himself will discover, whether he has always given reason to believe that there is now any cause of dread from the motions of the neighbouring clans. In page 137, he says, 'the chief has lost his formidable retinue; and the Highlander walks his heath unarmed and defenceless, with the peaceable submission of a French peasant, or English cottager.' In page 238, he observes, that the insular chieftains have quitted the castles that sheltered their ancestors,

and generally live near them, in mansions not very spacious or splendid: 'yet,' says he, 'they' (the modern houses) 'bear testimony to the progress of arts and civility, as they show that rapine and surprise are no longer dreaded.'

Can there be a greater variance than between these two passages and what our author insinuates in regard to the neighbouring clans? Or can any thing be more clearly demonstrative of Dr. Johnson's partial, vague, and contradictory mode of writing?

'There is neither shame from ignorance, nor pride from knowledge.' Unless the Doctor has a mind to retract what he formerly allowed in favour of the clergy, gentry, and middle rank of people, this observation can only regard the lowest class of the inhabitants; and we have already seen with how little reason or justice they can become the objects of such critical animadversion. It is not their natural character to be thought ignorant of such things as commonly belong to their state and situation in life; and few, I believe, of the same rank in other countries, extend their knowledge much beyond those bounds.

Had the Doctor and they been able to converse freely in the same language, he would have discovered in them a degree of acuteness, sagacity, and intelligence, not very common perhaps in the

same station of life; and which, I am persuaded, he would have had no great inclination to relate. That much, with a knowledge of their own domestic operations and concerns, is all that could be expected from them; and it ought to have exempted them from so scurrilous an attack. A comprehensive view of the present state of the country, or a minute acquaintance with the history of former times, was not to be obtained in huts and cottages. Their ignorance of such matters must necessarily be great, and their knowledge but little. There can, therefore, be no reason for shame from the one, nor for pride from the other.

'Neither curiosity to inquire, nor vanity to communicate.' In different parts of his work, he gives a very different account of their curiosity. In particular, in page 77, he represents them as much addicted to curiosity, a love of talk, and a fondness for new topics of conversation. But the Doctor has a peculiar knack at making them what he pleases, and unmaking them again, as different purposes may require.

If they have really so little desire to communicate, as is here asserted, I should be glad to know how he came by those numerous anecdotes in his Journey to the Hebrides, relating to the ancient friendships, feuds, intermarriages, military

alliances, and other transactions, of many of the insular chiefs. He often insists that we have no written vouchers for these things, nor any other authority than what is founded on tradition alone. If this be true, I can see no other channel through which he could have received his intelligence, than by communication from the inhabitants

Either then, contrary to what the Doctor has asserted elsewhere, there must be records to furnish such materials; or, contrary to what he asserts in this place, the people must have had some little vanity, or desire, at least, to communicate. I maintain the affirmative of both; but both cannot be as the Doctor says, unless, indeed, we can suppose him to have obtained a retrospective view of things, by means of his favourite faculty of the Second Sight.

Besides this general argument, which I think is conclusive, the Doctor himself furnishes a variety of instances to prove a communicative disposition in the Highlanders. Of these I shall select only a few.

The old woman whose hut he entered, by the side of Loch Ness, seems to have been sufficiently communicative; for he tells us, page 44, that 'she was willing enough to display her whole system of economy.' This much surely, is all the information that could be expected from her. The

Doctor, in his turn, seems as willing to describe as she was willing to display; and it must be confessed that he has acquitted himself in that part with great dexterity. The minuteness of trifling detail and the garrulity peculiar to an old woman are so happily hit off, that one would think it natural for our traveller to exhibit that character. Were such a representation wanted in a scenic entertainment, Dr. Johnson promises fair to give general satisfaction. His landlord at Anoch, likewise, seems to have had no great aversion to a pretty free communication; and the Doctor acknowledges his being indebted to him for many particulars, which he was desirous to know, relating to that part of the country. But the most direct instance against the Doctor's assertion we have in page 167. He there tells us, that their desire of information was keen, their inquiry frequent, and that every body was communicative.

Enough, I presume has been said upon these heads for the conviction of the reader, and too much, perhaps, for his patience; but as the attack was complicated, it was necessary the defence against each part should be particular.

In the above passage, the whole artillery of Dr. Johnson's malice is brought to the field at once. Before, he generally levelled but one en-

gine at a time; namely, either the pride, the poverty, or the ignorance of the country. But here he plays them off all together; and that they might not fail of the intended execution, he has taken care to succour them with a fresh recruit of calumny.

As usual he asserts with a boldness that bids defiance to contradiction; but an insolent and peremptory manner, the pomp of an inflated diction, and the gingle of a quaint and laboured antithesis, are left to supply the place of argument and proof. By such a parade, no doubt, he hoped to do much; but we have seen how little he has been able to effect. The weapons which he aimed with so much care have been flung in vain. His own testimony has blunted the point of every shaft.

We can therefore only say, that if Dr. Johnson's praises be well founded, his censures must be destitute of truth. It is impossible we can give our assent to contraries at one and the same time. But whichever we may choose to believe, our author stands in that mortifying kind of predicament, that he can be trusted no further than he agrees with other writers.

This description in caricature, which the Doctor gives of the islanders in general, seems so much the more inexplicable, that he speaks fa

vourably of every individual whom he had occasion to know or converse with.

The behaviour even of the lower class of people, on every occasion, seemed to please him. The two horse-hirers, who attended him from Inverness to the ferry-passage for Skye, acquitted themselves so much to his satisfaction, for their fidelity, care, and alertness, that he recommends them at parting to any future travellers. When travelling from place to place, in the different islands which he visited, the men who were occasionally employed either as guides, or to walk by his horse through rough grounds, have all obtained their share of his praise, for their care, attention, and civil behaviour. The rowers of boats, or mariners of vessels, in passing from one island to another, he allows to be dexterous and obliging. Every hut he enters gives him striking specimens of hospitality, and the kind and liberal disposition of the inhabitants. Wherever there is a house, he says, the traveller finds a welcome. And, in short, it was the good behaviour of the lower class of people that drew from him that remarkable observation in page 39, that 'civility seems part of the national character of Highlanders.'

As to the better sort, again, he may be said to be even lavish of praise. His encomiums are as

frequent as there were families he visited, or persons he conversed with. A few instances of this kind will be sufficient.

At the laird of Mackinnon's in Skye, the company was numerous and genteel, and so very agreeable to the Doctor, that their conversation sufficiently compensated the interruption given to his journey by the badness of the weather. At Raasay, he was enchanted by every species of elegance. At Dunvegan, the seat of the laird of Macleod, he had tasted lotus, and was in danger of forgetting that he was ever to depart. The amiable manners, and many other virtues, of the young laird of Col, are frequently and liberally displayed. At Dr. Maclean's, a physician in Mull, he found very kind and good entertainment, and very pleasing conversation. At Inch Kenneth, the residence of Sir Allan Maclean, he says he could have been easily persuaded to a longer stay; but life could not be always passed in delight. And, of Mr. Maclean, a minister in Mull, at whose house he stayed a night, our traveller says, that the elegance of his conversation, and strength of judgment, would make him conspicuous in places of greater celebrity.

After hearing Dr. Johnson give such testimonies as these, in favour of the Highlanders, could any one believe, that in the passage I have last

quoted from his work, he was speaking of the same people? Individually, he allows them to be entitled to commendation; but collectively, he loads them with slander and abuse. Though every man is civil, the whole taken together make a nation of savages and barbarians. Though he saw plenty and elegance every where, the country is pining in poverty, and destitute of every comfort of life. And though he gives so many instances of an uncommon share of learning and knowledge being pretty widely diffused among them, he pronounces them, in the bulk, to be an illiterate and ignorant people.

This surely is a very extraordinary way of drawing conclusions. To prove its absurdity, would be to prove a self-evident proposition. As well might Dr. Johnson pretend to tell us, that if a number of pieces of pure gold were to be fused together in a furnace, the product would turn out a mass or aggregate of a baser metal.

Page 170, he observes, that in the houses of the chiefs were preserved what accounts remained of past ages. 'But the chiefs,' says he, 'were sometimes ignorant and careless, and sometimes kept busy by turbulence and contention; and one generation of ignorance effaces the whole series of unwritten history. Books are faithful repositories, which may be a while neglected or

forgotten; but when they are opened again, will again impart their instruction: memory, once interrupted, is not to be recalled. Written learning is a fixed luminary, which, after the cloud that had hidden has passed away, is again bright in its proper station. Tradition is but a meteor, which, if once it falls, cannot be rekindled.'

Here the Doctor is making his approaches very fast, and is now almost on the point of springing the mine which he has been so long in digging. In this place he prepares his reader, by an artful insinuation, for what he means to assert boldly afterwards. To invalidate the credit of Highland antiquities seems to have been the great object of his journey. As the Doctor hates the trouble of much inquiry, and to accomplish this end in the most easy and compendious manner, he finds it necessary first to suppose that we had no written accounts of past ages, and then, but without any proof, to convert that supposition into a matter of fact.

I am as ready as Dr. Johnson to acknowledge the superiority of books over mere tradition, when they are written with candour and care. But even books themselves are not always to be trusted. There are false books as well as false traditions; and the Journey to the Hebrides, I

am afraid, is one of those books which will not be thought to deserve the name of a faithful repository. As to the circumstance of our writings, I shall speak to that point in its place; and doubt not but the good Doctor will appear to as much disadvantage in that part of his story, as he has already done in many other cases.

Let us suppose, however, in the mean time, were it only for argument's sake, that, some centuries ago, there were few or no written authorities among us; what would be the consequence? Not surely that general one which Dr. Johnson so unlogically affirms, namely, that 'one generation of ignorance effaces the whole series of unwritten history.' One or more chiefs, at a particular time, might, as he says, be careless, not very knowing, or kept busy by turbulence and contention; but I see no reason to conclude from thence, that the whole of the chiefs, and all the generation of men then living, should be so too. Unless, therefore, contrary to all probability, we are to suppose this much, our traveller's inference cannot follow, and his argument amounts to nothing. For if there could not be a whole generation of ignorance at once, the whole series of unwritten history could not be effaced.

At the same time, I am not inclined to lay more stress upon mere vague tradition than other

men. I am certain I would trust it as little as the scrupulous Doctor himself, and perhaps even a little less than he would, when it might seem to lean to a favourable purpose. In defending the vulgar doctrine of the Second Sight, he had no better foundation to rest upon; and yet he finds no difficulty in telling us upon that head, that when we are unable to decide by other reasons, we must be content to yield to the force of such testimony.

Tradition, however, in the liberal sense of the word, has in all ages been deemed of some weight; and the best writers have often appealed to it, not only when other evidence has been wanting, but likewise as an auxiliary proof. The tradition regarded by the Highlanders, in matters of any consequence, was of that nature which could not easily deceive them. It was so closely interwoven with the custom and constitution of the country, that it could not be separated from them; and it was handed down from one generation to another, not by bards and senachies only, but by the general voice and consent of a whole nation.

It was not of that vague and uncertain nature which Dr. Johnson represents it to be; nor of that weak and unmanly kind, which he himself has admitted, on particular occasions, as sufficient. But one thing is perfectly evident, that when

tradition is for the country, the Doctor rejects it; and when it operates on the other side he admits it as proof. Such a partial mode of representation speaks for itself.

That the Highlanders were not so liable to be imposed upon by the flattering compositions and tales of their bards and senachies, as our traveller would insinuate, is beyond all dispute. Besides those who were employed in those professions, there were multitudes in the country who spent most of their leisure hours in hearing, recording, and rehearsing the achievements of their ancestors and countrymen. Among these, there were many who composed poems in a strain equal to the bards themselves; and such private persons were always a check upon the bards and senachies by profession, to prevent their deviating from the truth.

Though the bards and senachies are no longer retained as formerly, this custom in the country is not yet discontinued. I myself, as well as thousands still alive, have seen and heard instances of what I have just now mentioned. Had the Doctor chosen it, he might likewise have been a witness to such recitals, notwithstanding the cursory view he took of the country. He acknowledges, however, that he had seen some who remembered the practice. This much from him is

pretty well; though, by putting the matter a little further back, it shows a visible design to narrow the real truth.

But though the Doctor's curiosity did not lead him this far, he might very easily, had he been a little more inquisitive, have heard much more concerning this matter than he has thought fit to communicate. It is not to be supposed that the Highlanders would have concealed any thing of what they knew, though he sometimes insinuates as much, had he but known how to make his inquiries agreeable.

But the misfortune was, that the Doctor was commonly deficient in that respect. His first question was generally rude, and the second a downright insult. This surely was not the most likely way to encourage intelligence. Yet there is still more reason to believe, from the general tenor of his work, either that he chose to avoid knowing what might be in favour of the country, or to misrepresent or suppress it when known, than that he should be refused information, had he been capable of asking it like a gentleman.

No other traveller but himself has attempted to tax the inhabitants of this country with a disposition to conceal the truth. I could cite several instances from his own tour to prove the contrary. In particular, the stories which he re-

lates of the kirk of Culloden, and of the cave in the island of Egg, are manifestly against the country. Is it credible, therefore, that they should be less ready to communicate faithfully what might be in its favour? But as the Doctor gives these, and such like anecdotes, without the least expression of diffidence, it would seem that he *never believed he was told the truth, but when he* was told something to the prejudice of Scotland.

Page 171. 'It seems to be universally supposed,' says he, 'that much of the local history was preserved by the bards, of whom one is said to have been retained by every great family.' He then tells us, that he made several inquiries after these bards, and received such answers as, for a while, made him pleased with his increase of knowledge; but, alas! he adds immediately after, that he was only pleased, As he had not then learned how to estimate the narration of a Highlander.

This sage remark at the end of his paragraph is owing to the same important cause, as a similar observation formerly about the business of brogue-making; namely, some inconsiderable variation in the subsequent accounts he received. At one time he was told that a great family had a bard and a senachie, who were the poet and historian of the house: and an old gentleman said, that

he remembered one of each. But unluckily, another conversation informed him, that the same man was both bard and senachie; and this variation discouraged the accurate and consistent Dr. Johnson.

It is the more surprising to hear him express any discouragement in this case, that he immediately after gives so easy and natural a solution of the difficulty himself, if it may be thought deserving of that name. He says very properly, as he said before concerning the two different accounts of brogue-making, that the practice might be different in different times, or at the same time in different families. This most certainly was the true state of the matter; and this plain account of it removes the stumblingblock at once.

I will venture to assert, from my own personal knowledge of some people, from whom the Doctor received a great part of his intelligence, that the affair was explained to him in this very manner upon the spot. I will still go further; I have authority to say so. It is, therefore, worse than childish in our author to continue still to express his distrust, on account of a circumstance so clearly reconcilable both to reason and truth, and for which he himself has furnished a solid and satisfactory explanation.

To discover doubts in such plain cases, is a mark of weakness; but to lay hold of them as a handle for general calumny, if a man is not a downright idiot, is wicked to the last degree. Such trivial variations are not only common, but even unavoidable, in the discourse of different persons, all the world over; and if that could be reckoned a valid objection, we find likewise from experience, that the writings of the most approved authors are liable to the same condemnation.

We have often seen our traveller driven to pitiful shifts to criminate the country; but, like many others, the present one happily proves only his own rancour and disingenuity, not the insincerity of Scotch or Highland narration.

But to follow out this matter a little further, as the Doctor builds so much upon it afterwards, let me seriously ask him, if he really found so much improbability in the above narrations, as to make him the complete infidel he pretends? If he did, he is truly a man "of little faith;" of much less, indeed, than I should have expected from the conjurer of the Cock-lane ghost, or the champion of the Second Sight.

Was the Doctor weak enough to believe, that the world would deem it a sufficient argument to overturn any fact, that one part of its history was related by one person, and another part by

another? Yet, by his own confession, this is clearly the case in the present point of dispute. In England, I presume, and in every other country whatever, a man might receive, from different people, different parts of information concerning the same thing. That, however, could be no just ground for charging the inhabitants with imposition.

In such a case, I believe, the Doctor would be ready enough to acquit the English, and perhaps any other nation but the Scotch. If this be so, it only proves, that he was so ridiculously extravagant as to expect more from the Highlanders than from any other people. But how could he imagine that every man he met with, even the most illiterate in other respects, should be a complete master of the whole history and antiquities of his country? None but a snarling cynic would find fault with a deficiency of this kind; and no man of a moderate degree of experience in common life would expect such absolute precision, even from the most knowing of the better sort themselves.

But let me interrogate my good friend the Doctor a little further. Did he never read in one historian any particular that was omitted by another? Did he ever read any two historians who were exactly the same? And, if they were

exactly the same in all points, would he call their works different histories? Does he think it impossible, that any two writers, having each the strictest regard to truth, should disagree in some points of narration relating to the same fact? And, if they should so disagree, does he think that would be a sufficient cause for rejecting their authority, and impeaching their veracity, in all other cases whatever?

If the Doctor answers these queries in a manner that is consistent with the common sense of mankind, he must drop his objections to the accounts which he received of the brogue-makers and senachies; unless he intends to maintain, that tradition ought to be more certain and infallible than his 'faithful repository' of written history.

If any thing more should be wanting to convince Dr. Johnson of the inconclusiveness of his reasoning, let me entreat his leave to state a similar case; for, as the bards and senachies were of the domestic order of people, I shall confine myself to that line.

Let us suppose, then, that a traveller in England is told, that, in one house, there is both a cook-maid and a chambermaid, but that, in another house, the same person acted in these two different capacities. This is exactly a parallel instance with that under consideration; and none

will doubt, I presume, but there are many examples of both kinds on the south side of the Tweed. Where then would be the inconsistency in these different accounts? Or would it be reasonable to infer, from such a difference in the economy of different families, either that the intelligence must be false, or that the existence of such female occupations was rendered doubtful? And yet one or other of these must follow, if the Doctor's conclusions concerning the bards and senachies are allowed to be just.

I could have illustrated this subject from the various professions of the party-coloured gentry: but I chose to exemplify in the female line, as the Doctor, I am told, is more than commonly attached to the sex, for a man of his advanced years. I shall leave him, therefore, to settle the matter with Kate and Moll, as well as he is able; and doubt not, but the "pristine reminiscence of juvenile jucundity" will induce him, for their sakes at least, to renounce an argument which would infallibly deprive the poor wenches of their places. Should he provoke them by his obstinacy, I am in some pain for the consequences. The Doctor's "mode of ratiocination," I am afraid, could not long hold out against the more simple but weighty arguments of the spit and mop-staff.

There appears nothing in the accounts concerning the bards and senachies which so much discouraged the Doctor, that can either call in question the belief of their own existence, or throw the least doubt on the histories of the families in which they resided. In most great houses there was one of each; while, in some others, there was a bard only. In the latter case, however, the accuracy of the family history could be but little affected; as the bard, whose business it was to repeat the genealogies of the chiefs, and to sing the achievements of their ancestors, must be no inconsiderable senachie, or antiquarian, in order to be qualified for those purposes.

The bards and senachies were not only supposed, as Dr. Johnson expresses himself, 'to preserve the local history,' but they actually did preserve it; and they were not only 'said to have been retained by every great family,' but they really were retained. The truth of this does not rest upon tradition alone. The charters of many great families bear witness concerning them; and they are likewise mentioned by many eminent writers. Both these, as being written authority, must almost persuade the unbelieving Doctor himself to renounce his infidelity.

Mr. Innes, who, in general, is no great friend to the bards, tells us, that in the thirteenth cen-

tury, at the coronation of Alexander the Third, a Highland bard pronounced an oration on the genealogy of the kings of Scotland. As this happened in the year 1249, before the destruction of so many of our records by Edward the First of England, and in the presence of the three estates of the kingdom, assembled on that occasion, we may naturally suppose the bards and senachies of those times to have been pretty accurate in their accounts; otherwise, it must have been difficult to find one who would venture to undertake such a task. At so public a solemnity there must have been many present who could have contradicted him, if he erred in his narration; and amidst the multitude of written testimonies then existing, he was sure of being detected, supposing none of his auditors had been able to correct him.

The same author allows, in page 237, that this genealogy was one of the most accurate performances of the kind which had ever existed.

The same circumstance is mentioned by all Fordun's continuators, and likewise by Major.

Ammianus Marcellinus, book xv. page 51, says, "The bards sung the remarkable achievements of their heroes, in verse, to the sweet melody of their harps."

Valesius, who pretends to write notes on this author, betrays a gross ignorance of his meaning,

as well as of the profession or employment of the bards, when he says in page 93, 'that the bards were a species of parasites or buffoons, who diverted the soldiers at their banquets with their jests and mimical gestures.' This is a most false and ridiculous account of the matter, and entirely explains away the meaning of his author; for Ammianus Marcellinus says no such thing. Besides, it is well known that they had others who acted in the capacity he mentions; that is, jesters, who likewise constituted a part of their domestics, as well as the bards.

In page 171, the Doctor says, that 'an old gentleman told' him 'that he remembered one of each,' namely a bard and a senachie. There was no occasion to make the gentleman very old to remember this much, as will soon be made appear. But Dr. Johnson does not choose to stop here; for, in the very next page, he sets every evidence for the existence of either bards or senachies, beyond all memory whatever. His words are, 'I was told by a gentleman, who is generally acknowledged the greatest master of Hebridian antiquities, that there had indeed once been both bards and senachies; and that senachie signified the man of talk, or of conversation; but that neither bard nor senachie had existed for some centuries.'

Here the testimony of the old gentleman, who said that he had seen both a bard and a senachie, is entirely set aside, by the contrary testimony of another gentleman, who, as Dr. Johnson says, told him, that none of either had existed for some centuries. I am rather apt to suspect the accuracy of the Doctor's representation, concerning this latter gentleman. Almost every man in the Highlands knows the contrary to be true; and if any one told him what he asserts, we may doubt his title to the character of an antiquarian. But the Doctor, with his usual caution, conceals his author's name; which certainly was prudent, as by this means the hazard of a personal refutation is avoided.

It was well judged in the Doctor, however, to make his gentleman so great a master of Hebridian antiquities. By this policy he secures a better title to be believed; and immediately after, he makes his own use of what he pretends to have received from such undoubted authority. 'Whenever the practice of recitation was disused,' says he, 'the works, whether poetical or historical, perished with the authors; for in those times nothing had been written in the Erse language.'

There has been occasion to observe, oftener than once, that it was the great object of the

Doctor's Journey, to find out some pretence or other for denying the authenticity of the ancient compositions in the Gaelic language; and now that design begins to unfold itself beyond a possibility of doubt. To effect his purpose, he takes a short but very ingenious method. He finds it only necessary to say, that no bards have existed for some centuries; that, as nothing was then written in the Gaelic language, their works must have perished with themselves; and consequently, that every thing now attributed to them, by their modern countrymen, must be false and spurious.

As the Doctor gives no authority for the facts, from which he draws this inference, he might as well have remained at home, as he says upon another occasion, and have fancied to himself all that he pretends to have heard on this subject. His bare word, without leaving Fleet-street, would have been just as good as his bare word after returning from the Hebrides. A journey, however, was undertaken; though there is every reason to believe, that it was not so much with a view to obtain information, as to give a degree of sanction to what he had before resolved to assert.

But though there had really been no bards or senachies for such a length of time, and though the Gaelic had really been an unwritten language,

there is no reason for supposing that all the ancient compositions perished immediately with their authors. I have already shown, that the practice of recitation was not formerly confined to the bards and senachies alone, and that it is not altogether disused even in our own times. It must therefore follow, that many of their works would still be preserved by this means only, even after the bards and senachies, by profession, might cease to exist.

There is no necessity, however, for trusting to this argument alone, I may hereafter take an opportunity of showing, that the Gaelic has not always been an uncultivated language; which will weaken one part of the foundation on which Dr. Johnson builds. In the mean time, I shall produce some facts to evince, that the domestic offices in question existed much later than he is willing to allow; and that, I presume, will go nigh to sap the remaining part of his fabric.

It is not necessary, nor will I pretend exactly to say, when the office of senachie, as distinct from that of bard, fell into disuse. By this I mean only the senachie by profession; for as to senachies from choice, and for the amusement of themselves and friends, they have always existed; and there are several, and those not contemptible ones, both of the better and lower sort of people

still living in the country. It will be enough to show, from well-known facts, that the regular profession of bard, who occasionally likewise officiated as senachie, has not been so long out of fashion.

The Macewens had free lands in Lorn in Argyleshire, for acting as bards to the family of Argyle, to that of Breadalbane, and likewise to Sir John Macdougal of Dunolly, in 1572. The two last of the race were Airne and his son Neil.

I have now before me an Elegy upon the death of Sir Duncan Dow Campbell of Glenurchy, composed by Neil Macewen. The date, which is 1630, is in the body of the poem. How long he lived after this, I cannot take upon me to say; but as there is much of the history and genealogy of the family interwoven with the performance, he must certainly have been both bard and senachie.

John Macodrum in North Uist, who is still alive, and not a very old man, had a yearly allowance from the late Sir James Macdonald of Slate, which, I believe, may be still continued by the present Lord Macdonald. I have, in my possession, many of his compositions, which are far from being destitute of merit.

I have likewise, in my hands, some poems, composed by one bard Mathonach; in one of

which he acknowledges to have received gold from the earl of Seaforth, at parting on board the ship that was to carry his benefactor out of the kingdom, after the battle of Sheriffmuir, in the year 1715. Another of his poems is in praise of Lord Lovat, who made him a present of a gun. Whether he was retained in the official quality of bard, by either of those noblemen, I cannot pretend to determine.

Many of my readers know, that one of the most remarkable bards of modern times, was John Macdonald, descended of the family of Keppoch in Lochaber. He was commonly called John Lom; and sometimes John Mantach or Mabach, from an impediment in his speech. He composed as many poems as would fill a pretty large volume. A great number of them are still extant, and many of them are in my possession. Most of his compositions have great merit.

He lived from the reign of Charles the First to the time of king William. But what may startle Dr. Johnson not a little, Charles the Second settled a yearly pension upon him, for officiating as his bard. As many of his poems mention the chief transactions of the times, as well as the names of the princes, chiefs, and nobility, whose achievements he sung, they carry their dates in their

bosoms, and fix the era in which they were composed. He lived to an extreme old age, so that there are still a few people of very advanced years who remember to have seen him.

But to come more closely to the point. I wish the Doctor may preserve his temper and patience when I inform him, that Neil Macvurich, descended of the famous race of Macvurichs, bards and senachies to the Clanronald family, is still alive, and enjoys free lands from Allan Macdonald of Clanronald, as his bard and senachie. This man writes the Celtic or Gaelic character, which was taught him by his predecessors, but he understands no other language or character whatever.

This piece of intelligence must equally surprise and gall our traveller; but, as the thing is true, there is no help for it. There is no fact whatever more certain or better known; and it could be attested by the most reputable people in that part of the kingdom, if the evidence of 'Highland narration,' which the Doctor has so often reprobated, could be admitted as satisfactory. But what is still more, he might easily, while in the country, have had the last and best proof of what is here asserted, even ocular demonstration. He might have seen the bard Macvurich, and others, with his own eyes; and

he might likewise have had the same unerring testimony for the existence of many manuscripts in the Gaelic language, for several centuries back.

This mode of information, however, the Doctor always avoided. It would not have answered the purpose with which he had set out. His plan was laid; and he never wished to see or hear any thing that could induce him to alter it. As, therefore, he was determined to write in the very manner he has done, he has this one claim to virtue at least, that he did not choose to write against conviction.

These instances are but a few of many that might be given; but, I flatter myself, they will prove sufficient to satisfy the public, if not even Dr. Johnson himself, that his Hebridian antiquarian, if such there was, has grossly misinformed him; and consequently, that the ingenious syllogism, which he has formed upon that information, however agreeable to mode and figure, is not agreeable to truth.

Unless the Doctor would have every testimony rejected but his own, I hope I have given reasons for believing, that there have been always regular bards and senachies in the country, and that there are still some of both; that the practice of recitation has not yet ceased, and that the Gaelic has not been an unwritten language: and

of course, that the Doctor's conclusion, from the opposite premises, does not necessarily follow, namely, that 'the works of the ancient bards and senachies, whether poetical or historical, perished with the authors.'

In addition to what has been said, I can assure the reader, that many poems of the bards I have already mentioned, as well as of several others, are in my own possession; and that many other gentlemen, in different parts of the Highlands, have likewise large collections, among which there are productions of very old dates. These are always open to the inspection of curiosity, when a stranger signifies a desire to see them; and a considerable number of them have been lately published, in a moderate volume, for the satisfaction of such as may not have an opportunity of visiting the country, and seeing the originals.

In regard to our historical works of any long standing, I have already mentioned, that they suffered greatly by the ravages of Edward the First, and of Cromwell. The Doctor still continues to reproach us with the want of them, though he knows by what means there is such a deficiency in our national annals; and that the unhappy divisions among ourselves, at those two periods, gave an easy opportunity to those inve-

terate enemies to the antiquities of Scotland, to destroy some part of our records, and carry off another.

As it now appears, that many of our senachies were also bards, it may naturally be supposed, that much of our ancient history was in verse. The same practice obtained in all other nations, in the early ages, and in the like circumstances. Accordingly, many of our poems consist of descriptions of battles, deaths of heroes, and concise narratives of other historical facts.

Page 172, he says, 'Whether the man of talk was a historian, whose office was to tell truth, or a story-teller, like those which were in the last century, and perhaps are now among the Irish, whose trade was only to amuse, it now would be vain to inquire.' It would be far from vain to make this inquiry, were it necessary; but the matter has been already cleared up. The case is sufficiently plain; but the Doctor generally creates doubts where there are none, and puzzles his reader with difficulties of his own making.

In the same page, he proceeds, 'probably the laureat of a clan was always the son of the last laureat. The history of the race could no otherwise be communicated, or retained; but what genius could be expected in a poet by inheritance?' Though the Doctor speaks doubtfully

of this fact, he concludes with a triumphant query, in the same confident manner as if he had proved it.

I shall grant him, indeed, that genius, any more than other endowments, cannot be expected to go by inheritance; and I should as little think it necessary for the son of the last laureat, as he wittily calls the Highland bard, to be a poet, as for the son of our pompous journalist to be a pedant. Sons may often possess qualities very opposite to those of their fathers. A mere blockhead has sometimes, no doubt, been the son of a very good bard; and there can be no reason why the offspring of even a Dr. Johnson, though without a title by inheritance, should not hereafter be distinguished for truth, candour, good breeding, and other virtues.

If the son of the last bard had a genius equal to the office, there is no doubt, but among a friendly and generous people, it would be reckoned an act of justice to prefer him to another; but if he was found deficient in that respect, it is evident from the practice of the country, that he could not succeed. There were regular schools for the education of bards, called, in the Gaelic language, *Scoil Bhairdeachd*, in which the youth, or candidates for the profession, underwent a long course of discipline; and, after all this prepara-

tion, such as were found incapable were always rejected. From this it would seem, that those who had the superintendency of those schools paid a strict regard to the judicious rule of the ancients, *Nascimur poetæ.* But more of this hereafter.

In page 173 he still goes on. 'The nation was wholly illiterate. Neither bards nor senachies could write or read.' I wish the Doctor had fixed the period to which he alludes; but that, like all other points accompanied with a charge, he prudently leaves undetermined. But let him choose what time he pleases, it will be easy to show the fallacy and unprincipled presumption of these assertions.

The early introduction of learning into Scotland is acknowledged by all the histories of Europe. In the first ages of Christianity, for our traveller, I suppose, does not carry his observations back to the times of the Druids, our learning, no doubt, was chiefly confined to the priesthood. But what then? Will the Doctor pretend to say, that the case was then different in any other country? If he will not, I should be glad to know wherein the force of his first assertion consists. While we had priests only, the nation could not be 'wholly illiterate' at any period of time.

Many instances have been already mentioned to prove the progress of literature among us, before the universal gloom of Gothic desolation; and the Doctor himself acknowledges, in page 37, that soon after its revival it found its way to Scotland. Where then will he fix the period for justifying his present assertion? If there is truth in history, if there is truth in Dr. Johnson himself, what he now says must appear to be unjust; and that the Scotch nation was not illiterate at any time, or in any sense of the word, while other nations could pretend to have been more enlightened.

Being thus driven from his post, our author has no refuge but in ignorance or wilful misrepresentation. To a man of the least dignity of mind, or sense of honour, either must be intolerable. But let him take which station he pleases, he will find himself disappointed in both. He forfeits every pretension to wisdom or to virtue; whether he prefers the weak shelter of the fool, or the more obstinate retreat of the knave.

It is always with reluctance I have recourse to any asperity of language; but the insolence and injustice of Dr. Johnson demand some severity. When a man dares to traduce a nation with so much indecent freedom, it would be false delicacy, indeed, not to treat him, in his turn, with all that

contempt that is consistent with truth. Opposed to a whole people, an individual sinks into nothing; and, if he forgets the superior respect that is due to the many, he necessarily divests himself of all title to complaisance.

As to his next assertion, that 'neither bards nor senachies could write or read,' I would ask him what he means? If it is that the ancient bards and senachies could not write or read English, I will not dispute the point. That language was as foreign to the old Celtic or Scotch bards and senachies, as it is to the French or Italian poets and historians at this day. Will the Doctor call the latter ignorant, because they neither write nor read the language of *his* country? If he will not, the absurdity of his insinuation against the former is too evident to require an answer on that account.

But as he told us before, and repeats it afterwards, that nothing had been written formerly in what he calls the Erse, his meaning more probably is, that our bards and senachies could neither write nor read any language whatever. If this really be so, the answer is short and easy, and I will tell him, without any ceremony, that the allegation is false and untrue.

As to the Doctor's Erse, it has a filthy sound, and I must reject it, as never being a word of

ours. It is only a barbarous term introduced by strangers, and seems to be a corruption of Irish. The Caledonians always called their native language Gaelic; and they never knew it by any other name.

If we go back to so early a period as the institution of the monasteries or abbacies of I, or Iona, Oronsay, and Ardchattan, &c., it is not to be doubted, but the use of letters was known in those seminaries, as well as in other places of the like kind in Europe. Were there no positive proofs of the fact now existing, it would be absurd to the last degree to deny it. Our monks must have understood the learned languages; and they must likewise have wrote them.

This much being granted, or rather self-evident, I can see no reason to prevent them from writing in their own language, more than the religious in all other countries. The Gaelic was the language in which they usually conversed; it was that into which it behoved the learned ones to be translated; and I well know it is the language by which my own lessons or exercises at school have been often explained to me, before I had acquired English enough to understand them otherwise. I shall proceed, however, to more positive proofs.

Of what has been written at Iona, I have heard,

in particular, of a translation of St. Augustine De Civitate Dei, and a Treatise in Physic, which is very old. The former was in the possession of the late Mr. Archibald Lambie, minister of Kill-martin in Argyleshire; and the latter was preserved in the Advocates' library at Edinburgh, where, no doubt, it is still to be seen.

Two Brothers of the name of Bethune were famous for the profession of physic, in the islands of Islay and Mull; and they were designed, from the places of their residence, * *Olla Ilich* and *Olla Mulich*. They were both educated in Spain, and were well versed in the Greek and Latin languages; but they did not understand one word of English.

Olla Ilich lived in the reign of James the Sixth, and held free lands of his Majesty, as one of his physicians. He wrote a Treatise in Physic, in the Gaelic character, with quotations from Hippocrates. This manuscript was seen at Edinburgh some years ago, by a gentleman of my acquaintance, in the possession of Dr. William Macfarlane.

One Dr. O'Connachar of Lorn, in Argyleshire,

* Olla signifies a doctor or professor in any science, particularly in physic.

wrote all his prescriptions in Gaelic; and his manuscript has been seen by many gentlemen still alive in that country.

There are, at present, two very old manuscripts in the possession of a gentleman in Argyleshire. One of them contains the Adventures of Smerbie More, one of the predecessors of the family of Argyle; who, as appears from the genealogy of that family, lived in the fifth century. The Doctor, perhaps, will not be much pleased to hear, that the other contains the History of Clanuisneachain, or the sons of Usnoch, a fragment in Fingal.

The same gentleman is likewise possessed of Prosnachadh Catha Chlann Domhnuill, * at the battle of Harlaw in 1411, composed by Lachlan More Macvurich, the bard. This performance is in exact alphabetical order, like the Doctor's famous Dictionary. It contains four epithets upon every letter of the alphabet, beginning with the first letter, and ending with the last. Every epithet upon the same letter begins with that letter; which proves to a demonstration, that some of the bards at least, were not unacquainted with letters in that age.

* A speech to cheer up the Macdonalds, when beginning the battle.

In the body of the genealogy of the Macvuich bards, this piece is mentioned, as the production of the beforenamed Lachlan More. Since I began these Remarks, the poem has been published by Mr. Macdonald in his collection, where it may be seen by the curious.

So far were the bards from neglecting learning, that, as I have already observed, they had poetical schools *(Scoil Bhairdeachd)* regularly established at Inverness, in Skye, and other places. In these they went through certain exercises, or pieces of trials, which were prescribed to them. Such as did not acquit themselves to the satisfaction of the proper judges, were rejected, as unqualified for the office; and this often happened, after many years study and preparation.

Their subject, or thesis, was often proposed to them without any previous warning.* It was generally a sentence, though, sometimes, but a single word; and, at other times, it was altogether unintelligible, like the Barbara, celarent, Darii, ferio, &c. in logic. Of this last sort was

* Bishop Leslie observes, page 54, that, "illis (pueris) exempla illustrium virorum, ad quorum se imitationem fingerent, rythmi cujusdam et carminis concentu, ad voluptatem illustrata proponere."

the subject which James the Sixth gave to some poets, as a trial of skill in their profession.*

I can assert from as good authority as Dr. Johnson can pretend to, that, during even the later periods, some of the Macvurich (or Macpherson) race of bards kept an academy in Skye, where they taught the Greek and Latin languages, as well as the Gaelic art of poetry.

If any ingenuous sense yet remains with the Doctor, he must necessarily feel sore at this account of the Scotch bards. Ignominy and disappointment stare him, at once, in the face. His impudent assertions are disproved, and his darling purpose defeated. He must therefore be doubly

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* SUBJECT.

Snamhaid an Lach is an Fhaoilin
Da chois chapail chaoilin chorr

ANSWER.

'D fhuaras Deoch a Laimh Ri Alba,
A Cup Airgid agus Oir;
An Aite nach do shaoil mi fhetin
'S da chois chapail chaoilin chorr.

* The poet who performed best was to get one cupfull of wine from the king's own hand, and another cupfull of gold as his reward.

stung, if he is capable of shame from falsehood, or of chagrin for the failure of his project.

But this forgery of our traveller, in asserting that the bards were so very illiterate, seems the more extraordinary, as he acknowledges that there were regular schools or colleges in Skye, and other places, for the education of pipers. His admitting this fact gives additional strength to what has been advanced concerning the academies of the bards; as it is not very likely, that a people, who were so attentive to an inferior art, should neglect the cultivation of genius, for a more important profession. It must be confessed, however, that the schools of the bards began to be considerably upon the decline, within these last two centuries. Whether their not meeting with the usual encouragement was owing to their presuming too much on their own importance, to the introduction of new customs, or to their profession not appearing so necessary after the revival of letters, it is not material to inquire: nor need we be more surprised, that the race of bards is now almost extinct, than that we hear no longer of the harpers, scialachies (tale-tellers), and jesters of former times, or that even the bagpipe itself is approaching to the eve of its last groans. Our great people, like those of other nations, have found out new modes of amusement and

expense, which probably, in their turn, will soon give way to others.

Upon the decay of their own seminaries at home, the bards went to Irish schools of the same kind; the consequence of which was, that they contracted much of the Irish poetical style, and a fondness for talking the Irish dialect of the Celtic language.

Many of our own countrymen, who were ignorant of this fact, have mistaken some of the writings and compositions of those Irish bred bards, for real Irish. Among the performances of this kind now extant, there are several which we would not hesitate to conclude to be true Irish, if we had not the most convincing proofs to the contrary.

We have a striking instance of this in the Elegy on Sir Duncan Dow Campbell, which has been mentioned above, and was composed by the bard Macewen in 1630. This poem is, in many places, altogether unintelligible to most Highlanders; though other productions of a much earlier date, as being composed in the Albion dialect of the Celtic, are perfectly understood. In particular, there is a manuscript poem by Maclean's bard, in praise of Colin earl of Argyle, in 1529, a complete century before the Elegy, which is entirely free from the obscurities to be found in

that performance. But Macewen was one of those bards who resided some time in Ireland. His poem is in the Gaelic character, and in his own hand-writing; and it is still preserved, among the papers of the family of Breadalbane, at Taymouth.

Besides adopting much of the poetical language of Ireland, the bards who went to that country for education wrote many things in imitation of Irish pieces. This has given occasion to that people to claim, as their own, various compositions, which were in reality the productions of Scotch bards.

Though I flatter myself, by this time, that the arrogant assertions of Dr. Johnson will appear sufficiently refuted, and consequently, that the conclusions he so confidently draws from them must fall harmless to the ground; yet I shall subjoin a few observations more, which seem to offer themselves properly in this place.

It will not be denied, I believe, that our religious societies must have been possessed of learning. That they were so in an eminent degree, appears from their being in so great request among other nations; for that of Iona, in particular, sent professors to Cologne, Louvain, Paris, and other places. Is it therefore probable, that, while they were employed in instructing fo-

reigners, their own countrymen alone should remain uninformed? Such a supposition is too violent for common sense.

As a proof that learning was much cultivated among us, all the abbots, priors, and monks, of those seminaries, were real Highlanders. The Doctor might have been satisfied of this, from observing the names of Macphingon (Mackinnon) and Mackenzie, on the tomb-stones of two of the abbots of Iona; and the name of Macdougall, prior of Ardchattan, upon his tomb-stone at that place.

The same observation will hold, with regard to our nunneries. In that of Iona one of the abbesses is designed, upon her tomb, in the patronymic manner, according to the custom of the country. The inscription both in Latin and in Gaelic is,

DOMINA ANNA DONALDI TERLETI FILIA.

ANN NI MHIC DHONUILL MHIC THEARLAICH.

In English, it means, Ann the daughter of Donald the son of Charles.

At Oronsay, and other places, the case was exactly the same. If therefore our religious seminaries, which were not a few, were filled with natives of the country, the nation cannot, in any

justice, be said to have been illiterate; though, contrary to all probability, literature had been confined to those societies alone. We likewise find, that there were monumental inscriptions, in the Gaelic language, in very early periods of time. I see no reason then, if the Highlanders could cut out their language upon marble or stone, why they might not be able to write it upon parchment or paper.

Among other things, I might add, that as many of our kings, with their whole courts, resided often in the Highlands, it is to be presumed, whatever was known any where else, must have been known there also.

Before the time of King Malcolm Cean More, as may be judged from his very name, no other language but the Gaelic was spoken in Scotland. It was in compliment to Margaret, the queen of that monarch, and the eldest sister of Edgar, that the English language was first introduced even at court. This happened in 1068–9; and, from that era, we may date, at least in the southern parts of the kingdom, the gradual decline of the Celtic, once the delight of all the courts of Europe.

It continued long, after this, to maintain its ground in the Highlands; but even there, at last, it began to be neglected to such a degree, that,

but for the uncommon beauties of its poetical compositions, it would scarcely have existed, except amongst the vulgar alone. But, of late years, the better taste of a few has directed the attention of others to its superior excellence; and now again it begins, as it were, to recover new life.

Nothing can more effectually illustrate the copiousness and energy of the Gaelic language than this, that several of the poems, which have been lately published, and are now so much admired by the learned, were the extempore effusions of some men, who were not otherwise very learned themselves. But if, as Dr. Johnson expresses himself, they were strangers to the 'splendours of ornamental erudition,' they were equally so to that constraint, which is occasioned by the unnatural fetters of modern criticism. Genius prevailed over art; and they have found the power to please, without any guide but nature.

To what has been already said on these heads, I shall now beg leave to add the authority of Bishop Leslie; which most people, I presume, will deem fully as good in this case, as that of our intelligent and candid traveller. In page 157, that learned prelate says, " that Eugenius the Seventh, in the year 699, took care to have many learned men assembled together from all parts of his dominions,

and to be supported at his expense, who were to record not only the transactions or exploits of the Scots, but likewise those of all other nations."

It may appear from hence, that the senachies, or historians of those early times, were not an illiterate set of men, who could neither write nor read. When they became afterwards so very ignorant as the Doctor says, is incumbent upon him to point out; and before he urges that ignorance as a reproach, if he really can make it appear, he ought likewise to prove, that their southern neighbours, at least, were more knowing at the same time.

I shall next borrow an argument from Dr. Johnson's Journey, to confute himself. Through the whole course of this work, his own contradictions have served me in much stead; and I take this opportunity of acknowledging my obligations, as the present assistance is none of the least considerable.

What he says, in speaking of Iona in particular, seems very inconsistent with what he has so lately advanced concerning the total ignorance of the country. As the passage is remarkable, I shall transcribe it for the sake of those who may not be possessed of his book.

'We were now,' says he, page 230, 'treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage

clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be *foolish*, if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses; whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me and from my friends be such frigid philosophy, as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue! That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.'

In these transports of a not unlaudable enthusiasm, the celebrity of Iona, as an ancient seat of learning, is very strongly impressed. That title to fame must, indeed, be allowed to be just, which could extort such glowing strokes of eulogy from the pen of Dr. Johnson; whose testimony, when favourable to Scotland, no one can have reason to suspect.

It will naturally occur to every reader, that institutions of this sort, and Iona was but one of many, cannot afford proofs of an ignorant, rude, or barbarous people. The Doctor, by way of emi-

nence, calls this the luminary of the Caledonian regions; and to show that he does not dignify it with that appellation in vain, he says it was a source of knowledge and religion to the inhabitants of the country. It is true, he talks, as usual, of savage clans and roving barbarians. But as this may be the effect of a habit, which he cannot easily lay aside, and by which, perhaps, he means no great harm, I shall take no further notice of it at present, than only to observe, that such rough epithets do not seem to be very happily chosen for the disciples of his revered Iona; a seminary which he extols so much for its wisdom and virtue.

Without wrangling about words, therefore, it is enough for my purpose, that he has allowed the Highlanders to have derived knowledge from Iona; and for his own purpose, I am afraid, that concession will rather be a little too much. He will find it no easy matter to persuade the public, that a nation can be 'wholly illiterate' and instructed in knowledge at the same time. There is a manifest repugnance between these two; and they never can be reconciled, unless, contrary to the usual interpretation of the word, it will appear, from the Doctor's Dictionary, that knowledge is but another term for ignorance.

This inconsistency in the Doctor's manner of

writing, exceeds those marvellous variations in the different accounts of brogue-making, which staggered our conscientious traveller so much, as to make him question the veracity of 'Highland narration.' The reader will be able to judge, by this time, to which of the parties such a stigma most properly belongs. Should he think of transferring it to the Doctor, I am only afraid he may create some embarrassment to himself. Having already seen so many of his contradictions, he must find him so branded all over, that he will hardly know where to stamp a new mark of disgrace.

I know not what degree of force the Doctor's patriotism might gain upon the plain of Marathon; but if we are to judge of his piety from his regard to truth, it seems not to have grown remarkably warm among the ruins of Iona. According to his own decision, therefore, he is a man 'little to be envied.'

Having, as he thinks, though without other proof than his bare assertion, established the non-existence of literature among us, he proceeds to apply that negative doctrine to our genealogies.

Page 173, he says, the recital of genealogies 'has never subsisted within time of memory, nor was much credit due to such rehearsers, who might obtrude fictitious pedigrees, either to please their

masters, or to hide the deficiency of their own memories. Where the chiefs of the Highlands have found the histories of their descent is difficult to tell; for no Erse genealogy was ever written.'

What our author means by what he calls 'within time of memory,' I am at a loss to know. If he means the memory of man, in its enlarged sense, he evidently contradicts himself in the preceding part of the same paragraph, where he says, that such recitals were anciently made when the heir of the family came to manly age. If he means the memory of any man now living, that would be but a trifling consideration, had it not even been already proved that the practice still continues.

As to the rehearsers of genealogies obtruding fictitious pedigrees on their masters, the Highlanders in general were too attentive to that branch of their antiquities, and too well versed in what related to their own descent and connexions in the country, to admit easily of such an imposition; though there had been no other means of preventing it, than by rehearsal only. But it will immediately appear, that they had other securities for accuracy in that point.

When the Doctor tells us that 'no Erse genealogy was ever written,' he ought to have told us likewise upon what authority he founds so pe-

remptory an assertion. Contrary to a similar falsehood of his, it has been already proved, that many other things had been written in the Gaelic language. It is not, therefore, likely, that a people so tenacious of their ancestry should leave the histories of their descent unrecorded. But to presumptive, I shall add positive proof.

I have just now in my possession very complete genealogical accounts of six different families, viz. that of the royal house of Stuart, the family of Argyle, Macdonald, Macian of Glenco, Macneil of Barra, and the bard Macvurich. They are all written in the Gaelic language and character; and as a proof that they have subsisted for a considerable length of time, it may be proper to inform the Doctor, that the last person mentioned in the second of these genealogies is Archibald earl of Argyle, who succeeded his father in 1661.

I could appeal to many others of very ancient dates; but this much will be sufficient as an answer to our traveller's equally modest and well-founded assertion, that 'no Erse genealogy was ever written.' I shall not, therefore, trouble the public with a catalogue which appears unnecessary. There is enough to satisfy the candid; and nothing, I know, will convince the captious. But should any one be still disposed to pay less

regard to my private testimony, than to that of Dr. Johnson, he may be completely satisfied by applying in any manner he pleases, to the heads of the families I have mentioned, or to any gentleman or clergyman in the country at large.

It will not, I hope, appear now so very 'difficult to tell, where the chiefs of the Highlands have found the histories of their descent.' But though nothing of this kind had been anciently written in Gaelic, a man of less penetration than the Doctor might easily have conceived, that the genealogies of our great families would naturally be preserved by the same means, to which the families of other countries owe the knowledge of their ancestry; that is, by charters of lands, contracts of marriage, and such other deeds of a public or private nature as were always recorded every where, and connected the chain of family succession.

Page 173. 'Thus hopeless,' says he, 'are all attempts to find any traces of Highland learning. Nor are their primitive customs and ancient manner of life otherwise than very faintly and uncertainly remembered by the present race.'

After what has been advanced, 'thus hopeless' too, I trust are all his malignant and impotent attempts to destroy either the reality or credit of Highland learning. The traces of it are not

so obscure as not to have been easily found, had such a research made any part of his business. But he never inquired about any monument of our antiquities, among such as were the ablest to inform him. He dreaded to hear disagreeable truths from the better sort; and therefore he either made no inquiries at all, or contented himself with the intelligence of the vulgar.'

As to what he says about the 'primitive customs and ancient manner of life,' his observation is too vague and indefinite, in point of time, to admit of an answer, if it otherwise deserved one. Are the customs and manners of remote times otherwise than very faintly and uncertainly remembered by the present race of English? I believe it would puzzle the omnipotent genius of the Doctor himself, to give satisfactory accounts of those matters at any period before the Norman conquest of his country, or even for some centuries afterwards. There is a folly in the subject of this remark which challenges our contempt more than a serious reply. If it proves any thing, it is the meanness and malignity of the author's own mind; for it shows, that there is nothing either so absurd or trivial but he lays hold of, to form a ground of calumny against the Scotch.

In page 174, he says, 'To the servants and dependants that were not domestics, (and, if an

estimate be made from the capacity of any of their old houses which I have seen, their domestics could have been but few,) were appropriated certain portions of land for their support. Macdonald has a piece of ground yet, called the bards' or senachies' field.'

It is evident in this place, that the Doctor estimates the number of the domestics by a very false rule. What now is to be seen of the old houses is generally the principal part only, and sometimes but a portion even of that. Around the castle, which was always reserved for the chief's own family, and some of their most particular friends, there were several smaller buildings for the accommodation of such other branches of the clan as might occasionally happen to be there; and on the outside of all these, were the lodging houses of the domestics.

The traces of those exterior buildings are still visible in many places; particularly in the neighbourhood of Lochfinlagan, at Dunivaig in Islay, and at Ardtorinish in Morven. They were likewise, no doubt, to be seen where the Doctor pretends to have made his observations; but he chose to suppress that circumstance, that he might take occasion to diminish the grandeur of our ancient chieftains, in the number of their domestics; which

was certainly much greater than in the present times.

His mentioning a piece of ground, 'belonging to Macdonald, which is still called the bards' or senachies' field, furnishes an argument against himself. He said some time ago, that neither bard nor senachie had existed for several centuries; and he has said lately, that primitive customs were but faintly and uncertainly remembered by the present race of Highlanders. Now, with all due submission to the Doctor, I must beg leave to observe, that, take it which way he will, the one of these assertions must refute the other. If the former be true, the name of the field gives one clear instance of their remembering a primitive custom; but if the Doctor chooses to abide by the latter, it necessarily brings the existence of bards and senachies nearer to our own times, than he had formerly admitted.

In page 177, Dr. Johnson enters into a kind of disquisition concerning the Erse, the vulgar appellation of the Gaelic language. Though he acknowledges that he understands nothing of it, he pronounces it, upon an authority worse, I suppose, than that of his horse-hirers, 'the rude speech of a barbarous people.' To persons as ignorant of the language, and as prejudiced as the Doctor

appears to be, this bold assertion may pass for matter of fact. But those who know the Erse or Gaelic critically, know that our traveller has as much misrepresented our language as he has done our manners.

I have a slight knowledge, at least, of some ancient languages; I understand a few living tongues; and I can aver for truth, before the world, that the Gaelic is as copious as the Greek, and not less suitable to poetry than the modern Italian. Things of foreign or of late invention, may not, probably, have obtained names in the Gaelic language; but every object of nature, and every instrument of the common and general arts, has many vocables to express it; such as suit all the elegant variations that either the poet or orator may choose to make.

To prove the copiousness of our tongue, it is sufficient to assure the public, that we have a poetical dialect, as well as one suitable to prose only, that the one never encroaches on the other; and yet that both are perfectly understood by the most illiterate, or, if the Doctor rather choose the word, the most unenlightened Highlanders.

The chief defect in the Gaelic tongue proceeds from that, which is reckoned the greatest beauty in other languages. It has too many vowels and diphthongs, which, though suitable to poetry, renders the pronunciation less distinct and marked

than happens in less harmonious and consequently more barbarous tongues. Some ignorant writers of the Gaelic have of late, it is true, bristled over their compositions with too many consonants; but these are generally quiescent in the beginning and end of words, and are preserved only to mark the etymon.

'Of the Erse language,' says he, 'as I understand nothing, I cannot say more than I have been told. It is the rude speech of a barbarous people, who had few thoughts to express, and were content, as they conceived grossly, to be grossly understood.' If the Doctor was ever told what he has here asserted, it must have been by some person as ignorant of the language as he professes himself to be, and consequently such authority can carry no weight. That a Highlander, who could be the only judge of the matter, should have passed so unfavourable a verdict on his own language and countrymen, as to call the one a rude speech, and the other a barbarous people, is improbable to the last degree. We must suppose, therefore, that our traveller was never told so, or that his informer was an ignorant and presumptuous blockhead.

It will not easily be believed, that the Gaelic, which was the language of the Celtic nations, can be so very rude a speech as the Doctor represents it: or that a powerful people, who extended their

dominion over all the countries between Cape Finisterre and the mouth of the river Oby, could be so very barbarous, and have so few thoughts to express. Conquest generally civilizes either the victors or the vanquished. It is of no consequence to inquire, what were the manners of our Celtic ancestors before they left their native homes. One thing is evident, that, after mingling with other nations, there appears no reason why their Scotch descendants should be more barbarous than their other tribes.

In every country, the public as well as private business of a people must be transacted in their native language; and that, by degrees, will improve it into elegance. I know of no instance to the contrary, except in England after the Norman conquest; where, for many centuries, the inhabitants were obliged to learn the language, and to be governed by the laws of their French invaders. Many of their legal forms and phrases, as well as of their national customs, are still French. In particular, the ceremony of passing bills in parliament is the same with that which was introduced by their foreign lords; and the nightly toll of the curfew is an everlasting but mournful monument of Norman despotism and English subjugation.

These circumstances, no doubt, contributed greatly to retard the improvement of the English

language; and accordingly we find, that it was long thought, as Dr. Johnson expresses it, but a 'rude speech' even by the natives themselves; for their best authors, till of very late, wrote always in Latin.

The Gaelic was formerly the general language of all Europe. In Scotland it was long the common language, not only of the whole country, but likewise of the court. All the pleadings in the courts of justice, as well as in parliament, were anciently in Gaelic; and we have undoubted testimonies, that even so very lately as in the parliament held at Ardchattan in Argyleshire, in the reign of the great Robert Bruce, it was the language in which all their debates were carried on.

It cannot surely appear, from these circumstances, that the Gaelic was formerly an uncultivated tongue. If it has not received much improvement of late years, I am certain it has lost little of what it had. It is still the language of a large tract of country; and there are many who write it with elegance and correctness.

This, I think, is as little an evidence of the Erse or Gaelic being at present a 'rude speech,' as the Doctor's frequent encomiums on individuals are proofs of a 'barbarous people.'

But as it was a custom with the Greek and Roman authors to call every thing rude and barbarous

which did not belong to themselves, our traveller, perhaps, may think himself entitled to take an equal liberty with whatever is not English. If the greatest admirers of the ancients, however, cannot altogether acquit them of illiberality in that mode of speaking, how shall we be able to find an excuse for Dr. Johnson in aspiring to the same privilege? The great inferiority of his pretensions heightens the offence; and what was only blameable in them, becomes in him a ridiculous and unpardonable presumption.

'After what has been lately talked,' continues he in the same page, 'of Highland bards, and Highland genius, many will startle when they are told, that the Erse never was a written language; that there is not in the world an Erse manuscript a hundred years old; and that the sounds of the Highlanders were never expressed by letters, till some little books of piety were translated, and a metrical version of the psalms was made by the synod of Argyle.'

As we have nothing here but repetitions of former assertions, the whole of this passage might be dismissed, as having been refuted in other places. But I shall add a few things more, in confirmation of what has been already said.

That not only poems of considerable length, but likewise genealogies of families, and treatises

on different subjects, have been anciently written in the Gaelic, has been proved by a variety of instances. Let me now produce an additional testimony from Mr. Innes. In page 603 of his Inquiry, he mentions a chronicle of a few of our kings, from Kenneth Macalpine to Kenneth the Third, son to Malcolm the First; and he says, that the original chronicle or history, from which that piece was extracted, seems evidently to have been written in the Gaelic language, and that some time too before the year 1291. He has preserved, in his Appendix, the Latin chronicle, which is a copy of the original.

Besides the manuscripts already taken notice of, I could mention many more, were it necessary, in this place, to trouble the reader with a longer list; and other gentlemen are acquainted with a still greater number than has come within my knowledge.* Those that yet remain, afford more than a presumptive proof, that there once must have been more: I have already pointed out the means, by which most of them were either destroyed or carried away; and even of such as are preserved, many, no doubt, are little heard of, by having fallen into hands that are ignorant of their contents.

From the many accidents, therefore, to which old manuscripts are liable, it would be an unfair

way of reasoning to say, that because they are not always to be seen, or because every one is not acquainted with them, they never had existed; and yet this is the very ground upon which Dr. Johnson proceeds. If the first person he chanced to interrogate did not say that he had seen the Gaelic original of this or that particular subject, he inquired no further, but immediately set it down as a fact, that no body else had ever seen it, and that no such manuscript had ever existed.

At other times when he met with more intelligent people, who offered to direct him to old manuscripts, he would not suffer himself to be convinced that any such things existed; and if they continued to assert the fact, he generally broke out into an unmannerly rage, declaring, with great vehemence, that if there were any manuscripts in the Highlands, they could not be Gaelic, but must certainly be Irish.

Thus does Dr. Johnson attempt to disprove all traces of Highland learning, by a twofold kind of method; by resting satisfied, in his inquiry, with the answers of the ignorant; and rejecting the assistance of such as were better able to inform him.

His second assertion says, 'that there is not in the world an Erse manuscript a hundred years old.' This is sufficiently refuted by the dates I

have already mentioned, none of which are later than the year 1630; which of itself alone, were there none of a higher antiquity, is enough to put our author to silence, if not to shame.

Among the old manuscripts of considerable length, I took notice particularly of two. One gives the history of Smerbie More, one of the ancestors of the Duke of Argyle, who lived in the fifth century, according to a manuscript genealogy of that illustrious family; and the other contains the history of the sons of Usnoth. They are both in the Gaelic language and character, and are so very old as to be difficult to be read. They are in the possession of Mr. Macintyre of Glenoe, near Bunaw in Argyleshire.

But as the Doctor may think it too great a trouble to travel again to the Highlands for a sight of old manuscripts, I shall put him upon a way of being satisfied nearer home. If he will but call some morning on John Mackenzie, Esq., of the Temple, Secretary to the Highland Society at the Shakspeare, Covent-Garden, he will find in London more volumes in the Gaelic language and character than perhaps he will be pleased to look at, after what he has said. They are written on vellum in a very elegant manner; and they all bear very high marks of antiquity. None of them are of so modern an origin as that mentioned by

the Doctor. Some have been written more than five hundred years ago; and others are so very old, that their dates can only be guessed at, from the subjects of which they treat.

Among these are two volumes which are very remarkable. The one is a large folio manuscript, called An Duanaireadh Ruadh, or the Red Rhymer, which was given by Mr. Macdonald of Glenealladel in Muideart to Mr. Macdonald of Kyles in Cnoideart, who gave it to Mr. Macpherson. It contains a variety of subjects, such as some of Ossian's Poems, Highland Tales, &c. The other is called An Leabhar Dearg, or the Red Book, which was given to Mr. Macpherson by the bard Macvurich. This was reckoned one of the most valuable manuscripts in the bard's possession.

Since I began these Remarks, I have been informed by Mr. Macdonald, the publisher of the Gaelic poetry, that his uncle, Mr. Lachlan Macdonald in South Uist, was well acquainted with the last of these manuscripts; and as that gentleman is a great master of the Gaelic language and character, his opinion concerning its antiquity, from the character and other circumstances, is the more to be relied upon.

To finish this head at present, let me next inform the Doctor, that the bard Macvurich alone is in possession of a greater number of Gaelic ma-

nuscripts than the Doctor perhaps would choose to read in any language. At the earnest and repeated request of Mr. Macdonald, the publisher just mentioned, the bard has been at last prevailed upon to open his repositories, and to permit a part of them to be carried to Edinburgh, for the satisfaction of the curious, and the conviction of the incredulous. I myself have seen more than a thousand pages of what has been thus obtained, as have hundreds besides; and Mr. Macdonald assures me, that what he has got leave to carry away, bears but a very small proportion to what still remains with the bard.

It seems almost unnecessary to mention that all those manuscripts are in the Gaelic language and character. Some of them have suffered greatly by bad keeping; but many more by the ravages of time. The character of several is allowed by all, who have seen the manuscripts, to be the most beautiful they had ever beheld.

From all this, let the public judge of the truth of the Doctor's third assertion in the last cited paragraph, 'that the sounds of the Highlanders were never expressed by letters, till some little books of piety were translated, and a metrical version of the Psalms was made by the synod of Argyle.'

Had he made the proper inquiries, he would

have found that Mr. Robert Kirk, minister of Balquidder in Perthshire, had wrote a metrical version of the Psalms prior to that of the synod of Argyle. The same gentleman likewise wrote a Gaelic Vocabulary, which is mentioned, I think in Lhuyd's Archæologia Britannica; and from which I have some extracts. But long before all this, there was published a Gaelic Treatise on Religion by Bishop Carsewell of Argyle.

More instances might be given; but these, or any one of them indeed, must as effectually destroy the veracity of the Doctor's assertion, as if a hundred had been produced.

Though it has already appeared that much has been written in the Gaelic, and there has, no doubt, been much more than we are now able to discover, I am ready to admit that an equal proportion has not been printed in that language, as in most others. That, however, is easily accounted for. Before publishing in vernacular languages was much used in Europe, the Royal House of Scotland had succeeded to the crown of England. That event naturally induced men either of ambition or genius to repair to the seat of government, and rendered a more general cultivation of the English language necessary. As, therefore, every person of any note in the Highlands understood the English perfectly, there could be no

great encouragement for many publications in another language, which the poorer sort only had occasion to purchase. Besides, as I observed before, it was thought at one time good policy to suppress the Gaelic, though afterwards it has appeared to be a very bad one.

In the same page, our author proceeds, 'Whoever, therefore, now writes in this language, spells according to his own perception of the sound, and his own idea of the power of the letters. The Welsh and the Irish are cultivated tongues. The Welsh, two hundred years ago, insulted their English neighbours for the instability of their orthography; while the Erse merely floated in the breath of the people, and could therefore receive little improvement.'

Nothing can be more false than what is here said of the uncertainty of Gaelic orthography. It has a regular and established standard, as is well known to many gentlemen of taste, candour and curiosity, who, though not natives of the Highlands, have been at much pains to become acquainted with our language. I shall only appeal to two respectable evidences, namely, General Sir Adolphus Oughton and Sir James Foulis. These gentlemen will give a very different account of the matter from that which is exhibited by Dr. Johnson; and yet they cannot be sus-

pected of any national partiality for the Gaelic, as Sir Adolphus is an Englishman, and Sir James a South-country Scot.

This much, together with the proofs already given of so many manuscripts, treatises, and books in the Gaelic language, is sufficient to show what truth is in the Doctor's assertion, that our language has merely floated in the breath of the people. It would be unnecessary, therefore, to enlarge upon this branch of his doctrine.

In allowing the Welsh and Irish to be cultivated tongues, our author seems not aware that he is paying an indirect compliment to the Gaelic at the same time. The Welsh has ever been acknowledged to be a dialect of the Celtic or Gaelic; and Mr. Lhuyd, a learned and worthy Welshman, who travelled over all the Highlands, says, in a letter of his to Mr. Rowland, author of Mona Antiqua, and published towards the end of that work, that "about two-thirds of the Scots Gaelic is the same with the Welsh." As to the Irish, it is well known to every proper judge to have a still greater affinity to our language; for the Albion and Irish Gaelic differ not perhaps so much from each other as any two dialects of the Greek.

But without meaning to derogate from the Welsh and Irish languages, I should be glad to

hear the Doctor explain in what particular sense he calls them cultivated tongues. If it is only because they form the common speech of their respective countries, the Gaelic, in that respect, stands upon an equal footing. I have heard of no memorable histories, no systems of philosophy or politics, which have been published in either of those languages. There are Welsh and Irish translations of the Bible, and perhaps of some other small tracts, such as the Doctor calls 'little books of piety;' and printing, I believe, has not yet been carried much further in any of them. As therefore the Gaelic enjoys all these advantages at least, it seems to have equal pretensions to stability.

Page 178. 'That the bards could not read more than the rest of their countrymen, it is reasonable to suppose; because, if they had read, they could probably have written; and how high their compositions may reasonably be rated, an inquirer may best judge by considering what stores of imagery, what principles of ratiocination, what comprehension of knowledge, and what delicacy of elocution he has known any man attain who cannot read.'

Here the Doctor seems determined to go to the root of the matter at once. It was necessary for his design to make the bards appear incapa-

ble of recording their own compositions, by asserting that they could neither read nor write; but as that alone would do but half his business, he resolves to go a little further. Among his readers there might be some saucy folks, who might take upon them to doubt that the bards could always be so very illiterate, if there was any learning in the country. The least suspicion of this kind would have marred the whole plot; and therefore it became absolutely indispensable, with the next dash of his pen, to make the rest of their countrymen as ignorant as he had made the bards themselves. As this needs no further comment, I shall leave the Doctor, with all the benefit he can derive from pleading the law of necessity, to receive the verdict of the public.

As it has so often appeared that bards could both read and write, the pompous jargon, which closes the above quotation, cannot apply to them, and consequently is only so much ink spilt. But, though the inference deduced therefrom by no means affects the bards, there is a fallacy in the reasoning, which deserves to be noticed.

I am as ready to admit the general advantages which result from books, as our book-compiling journalist himself; but I cannot agree with him in thinking, that the exercise of the mental powers depends entirely upon their assistance. True

genius springs from nature; it is her gift alone: it may be improved by reading, but never can be supplied. Every age and country has furnished instances of men, who, by dint of natural talents alone, have acquired a distinction, which others could never attain with their loads of learned lumber. Even the wilds of America have produced orators; and poets have flourished beneath arctic skies. In the harangues of the Indian, there have been discovered 'principles of ratiocination,' and a 'delicacy of elocution,' that would not disgrace a Cicero; and, in the free effusions of the Scandinavian muse, there are often 'stores of imagery,' which would equally enrich and adorn the most laboured compositions of Dr. Johnson.

In page 179, our traveller proceeds: 'the bard,' says he, 'was a barbarian among barbarians, who, knowing nothing himself, lived with others that knew no more.' To know but little is a misfortune; but to know nothing is the full measure of misery complete.

At what time the whole country was in this forlorn state of combined ignorance and barbarity, is not very easy to tell. If it was before the establishment of Iona, which he extols so much for learning and virtue, the Doctor, I am afraid, speaks from conjecture; for the period is so very

distant, that he could ascertain but little of the true condition of our ancestors before that time. But if it was afterwards, let me ask him, what becomes now of those 'benefits of knowledge,' and those 'blessings of religion,' which he allows the clans, in page 230, to have derived from that luminary of the Caledonian regions? That surely was an unprofitable knowledge, which left the people ignorant; and that a feeble religion, under which they still remained barbarians.

In the same page, he mentions an illiterate poet lately in the islands, who, among other things, had composed a dialogue, of which he heard a part translated by a young lady in Mull, and thought it had more meaning than he expected from a man totally uneducated. Though this is but a faint way of acknowledging the merits of the dialogue, the anecdote furnishes one strong objection to his late doctrine, concerning the total incapacity of men who could not read. He seems sensible of this; and, to evade the force of it, he endeavours to account for the fact by telling us, that this man 'had some opportunities of knowledge; he lived among a learned people.'

This, however, is only changing his object with removing the difficulty; for, as through the whole of his Journey, contradiction follows the Doctor like a shadow, in attempting to avoid one

absurdity, he here falls plump into another. To derogate from the native genius of one poor poet, he now makes the whole islanders a learned people; though, at other times, to give the greater weight to his own misrepresentations, he mentions them in a different language. In particular, we cannot have forgot how he characterizes them in page 170. He there says, they are an illiterate people; that they have neither shame from ignorance, nor pride in knowledge; neither curiosity to inquire, nor vanity to communicate.

He next tells us, that there is an antipathy between our language and literature; and that 'no man that has learned only Erse is, at this time, able to read.' This antipathy, I believe, exists no where but in the Doctor's brain; and it has been already shown, that many who had 'learned only Erse' have, at all times, been able both to read and write. Such people correspond regularly in the Gaelic language.

His remarks upon the different dialects of the Gaelic seem hardly to merit notice. If that circumstance be a defect, it has been the fate of all languages, even the most polished. The Greek had many dialects; and, I believe, there is not a province in France, or a county in England, at this day, that has not many words and modes of pronunciation which are not well understood in

others. The inconveniency, however, has the same remedy in the Gaelic as in other languages; there is a written diction, which pervades all dialects, and is understood in every island.

In page 180, he says, 'In an unwritten speech, nothing that is not very short is transmitted from one generation to another. Few have opportunities of hearing a long composition often enough to learn it, or have inclination to repeat it so often as is necessary to retain it; and what is once forgotten is lost for ever.'

Having already given so many proofs that the Gaelic is not 'an unwritten speech,' I might save myself the trouble of any particular remarks upon this passage; but as there is something specious in the argument, which might impose upon unwary readers, a few collateral observations may not be improper.

Though nothing had ever been written in the Gaelic, the manners and customs of the Highlanders were peculiarly adapted for preserving the various productions in their language. The constant practice of recitation, which is not yet altogether disused, gave them 'opportunities of hearing a long composition often enough to learn it;' and their desire to amuse themselves in the solitudes of hunting, or a pastoral life, as well as to bear their part in social entertainments, gave

them 'inclination to repeat it' as often as was necessary to retain it.

In this manner did the inhabitants of every village and valley supply to themselves the want of the more fashionable amusements of towns and cities, and wear off the winter evenings alternately in each other's houses; and in this manner have many things, 'not very short,' partly written and partly not written, been 'transmitted from one generation to another.'

By these means, there was no great danger of any thing being so far forgotten as to be 'lost for ever;' for if any one person should forget a particular part, there were always thousands who remembered the whole. Besides, in poetical compositions, it is well known that the memory is greatly assisted by the cadence and rhyme; and as to such pieces of any length as we have in prose, they are the more easily retained, as they generally consist of a variety of episodes, depending on each other, and highly adapted to captivate the fancy.

Among the latter kind are our tales, which are, for the most part, of considerable length, and bear a great resemblance to the Arabian Nights Entertainments. One of those, in particular, is long enough to furnish subject of amusement for several nights running. It is called Scialachd

Choise Ce, or Cian O Cathan's Tale; and though scialachies, or tellers of tales by profession, are not now retained by our great families, as formerly, there are many still living, who can repeat it from end to end, very accurately.

This cannot appear improbable to those who consider, how much the memory is strengthened and improved by frequent use. When duly and constantly exercised, it is capable of surprising exertions; and we have sometimes read of instances, which amount even to prodigies.

I myself once knew a man, who, I am certain, could repeat no less than fifteen thousand lines; and there is now living one Poet Macintyre, who can repeat several thousands. This man is altogether illiterate, though not a despicable poet. Besides remembering many of the compositions of others, and likewise of his own not yet published, he lately dictated, from memory, as many songs composed by himself, as fill a small volume of one hundred and sixty-two pages, and amount to upwards of four thousand lines.

There is no doubt, but, in ages when the Highlanders had fewer avocations than at present, there have been instances of memory among them as far superior to those now mentioned, as they are to that of Dr. Johnson; whose weakness of retention seems to be so great, that he often

forgets in the next page what he has advanced in the preceding.

But, if more seems necessary, I must request the Doctor to call to mind what was said in answer to his attack upon the poems of Ossian, by W. Cambrensis, in the St. James's Chronicle of the 23d of March, 1775. "I presume," says that gentleman, "the Doctor must remember boys at school, who would repeat one or all the Eclogues, or a Georgic of Virgil. I can with truth aver, and what many will affirm, that there are several persons in Wales, who can repeat the transactions (however fabulous) of Arthur and his Mil-wyr, i. e. his thousand heroes, which are as long as the poems of Ossian." A little after, he adds, "We have still extant in the same manner, i. e. handed down by tradition, some of the poems of Taliesyn pen Byrdd, i. e. the Chief of Bards, or Poets, in the Welsh language, and they not inferior to modern poetry of high estimation. Taliesyn flourished in the year 500."

The practice of committing much to memory seems to be very old, and probably was borrowed from the Druids, who, as we are assured by authors of credit, were obliged to get twenty thousand lines by heart, before they were judged fit to exercise their office; for it was an established maxim among them, never to commit any of their

religious tenets to writing. I hope the Doctor will not consider it as an affront, that I have taken the liberty to mention a historical fact, which a man of his profound erudition might be supposed to know.

In the same page, he goes on: 'I believe there cannot be recovered, in the whole Erse language, five hundred lines of which there is any evidence to prove them a hundred years old. Yet I hear that the father of Ossian boasts of two chests more of ancient poetry, which he suppresses, because they are too good for the English.'

I shall make no other answer to the first part of this passage, than by referring the reader to the numerous manuscripts, volumes and dates, which have been already mentioned. As to the anecdote relative to Mr. Macpherson, whom our traveller sarcastically terms the Father of Ossian, I am glad to have it in my power to expose its falsehood, by the most direct and unequivocal proof.

Though I had found so many reasons to doubt the credit of Dr. Johnson's bare assertion, and though the general character of the gentleman he accuses, rendered it highly improbable that he could have expressed himself in terms so inconsistent with moderation, if not with prudence and good sense, yet I was desirous, in a point so very delicate, to have something positive to produce.

As I had not the pleasure of Mr. Macpherson's acquaintance, I requested the favour of one of his friends, to whom I am known, to desire him to give a true state of the matter. He was obliging enough to comply; and Mr. Macpherson's answer was nearly in these words:

"Dr. Johnson has either been deceived himself, or he wittingly deceives others. That I might have said in company, that there still remained many poems in my hands untranslated, is not improbable, as the fact is true; but that I should have accompanied that assertion with a sarcasm on the English nation is impossible; as I have all along most thoroughly despised and detested those narrow principles, which suggest national reflections to illiberal minds. I have lived in England long; I have met with public favour; I have experienced private friendship; and, I trust, I shall not, like some others, speak disrespectfully of the bulk of a nation, by whom, as individuals, I have been uniformly treated with civility, and from whom I have often received favours. As I never courted the friendship, nor was ambitious of the company, of Dr. Johnson, he cannot authenticate the assertion from his own knowledge; and if he received the anecdote from others, they either flattered his prejudices, or imposed upon his weakness."

In the same page he gives such an account of

Highland narration, as plainly discovers what sort of people he interrogated. In one place, he says, 'the inhabitants knowing the ignorance of all strangers in their language and antiquities, perhaps are not very scrupulous adherents to truth.' Soon after, he adds, 'They have inquired and considered little, and do not always feel their own ignorance. They are not much accustomed to be interrogated by others, and seem never to have thought upon interrogating themselves.'

After what we have heard the Doctor say before, in favour of the clergy and better sort of people, it is evident he can here mean only the vulgar. What, then, are we to think of a man who could be weak enough to expect accurate intelligence from that class of the inhabitants, and afterwards be so very disingenuous as to characterize the whole country from their measure of knowledge? Their answers, I allow, could not always be satisfactory and just; but yet, though such poor people could have little else than the received traditions of the country to assist them, it is simply impossible they should always be in the wrong. It was when their answers came nearest to the truth, that they were most offensive to Dr. Johnson. A genuine account of the facts did not suit his purpose, and therefore it became necessary to disparage the testimony he received. To

effect this, a double charge of ignorance and deceit, in the inhabitants, is made use of, through any one of them would have been sufficient. But it has been all along the peculiar misfortune of our traveller to overact his part; so that by endeavouring to be too secure, he has often defeated his own views.

To corroborate the above remarks, the Doctor calls in the testimony of his friend and fellow-traveller. 'Mr. Boswell,' continues he, 'was very diligent in his inquiries; and the result of his investigations was, that the answer to the second question was commonly such as nullified the answer to the first.'

Though Mr. James Boswell was the *fidus Achates* of our "Peregrinator," his attendance and services are seldom "commemorated" in the work now under consideration. The last time he was mentioned, we found him employed in the notable exploit of catching a cuddy; now he is brought in by the head and shoulders, as an evidence against Highland narration. This sullen silence of our author, relative to his friend, is but a scurvy kind of behaviour towards a man, who evidently wished, that his jolly-boat might be carried down in tow, along the tide of time, by this first-rate man of letters.

Mr. Boswell, it seems, has made several attempts

to place his own statue in one of the niches in the temple of Fame. He, too, like our traveller, wrote "A Journey." In a violent episode in his work, he has introduced his learned friend in the character of a legislator among the wilds of Corsica. The ridicule of making a man, who has not the least command over his own cynical passions, the "fabricator of a system of polity to an infant state," is too glaring to require any comment. But Mr. Boswell had no other way of paying a compliment to his friend.

The return made by this friend is the bringing Mr. Boswell as a kind of Old-Bailey evidence against his native country. Did those, who know Mr. Boswell best, sit as jurymen, his "corroborative testimony" would have little weight in deciding the cause. Though he neither speaks nor writes English, he was totally unacquainted with what Dr. Johnson calls the Erse language; and the Doctor might as well have taken his own opinion upon the subject, as have called in the aid of one equally ignorant with himself.

Mr. Boswell, however, was a suitable second for a man who had resolved to combat every thing that might tend to throw any credit upon Scotland. Having failed in his own endeavours to make a figure in letters, he had, it seems, resolved to sacrifice every thing to the prejudices of the

literary Moloch whom he worshipped, with a vain hope that he might acquire, as it were by reflection, that ray of reputation which his own opaque genius had denied. These observations may appear severe; but few, I am told, who are acquainted with Mr. Boswell, will say they are misplaced. Having, for my own part, seen his works, I have no ambition to know the man.

Page 181. 'We were a while told,' says the Doctor, 'that they had an old translation of the scriptures; and told it till it would appear obstinacy to inquire again. Yet by continued accumulation of questions we found, that the translation meant, if any meaning there were, was nothing else than the Irish Bible.'

When the Doctor acknowledges that he was so repeatedly told of an old translation of the scriptures in the Gaelic language, and at the same time avows his own obstinacy in disbelieving the fact, he gives a striking proof how difficult it was to convince him of any thing in favour of the country. A stubborn incredulity in such circumstances, and a resolution not to be persuaded, is one and the same thing. If he was to reject all testimony, I would beg leave to ask him, in what manner he could propose to be satisfied? He could not surely be absurd enough to imagine, that every person, who mentioned the existence of such a manuscript

translation, should be able to prove his assertion, by producing a copy. It was a work of too great length and labour to be looked for in private hands.

That there was such a translation, is beyond all doubt. . It was lately in the library of Archibald Duke of Argyle; and it is still, no doubt, in the possession of his successors. It was never printed, for reasons already observed. Before the two kingdoms fell under the sway of one sovereign, there was little printed any where in vernacular tongues. After that period, a kind of policy was adopted, though since found to be a bad one, for refusing any public encouragement to the Gaelic language, that the lower sort of people in the Highlands might be under a necessity of learning the English. The intention was, to abolish the chief national distinction between the inhabitants of both kingdoms, and assimilate them more to each other, by a uniformity of speech. This, for a long time, prevented any publication of consequence from appearing in our language. But the error has been at length discovered; and now the Gaelic, by degrees, has begun to find employment for the press.

With regard to the other portions of scripture, I shall refer the Doctor to Mr. Pennant's Tour in 1769. In page 134 of the Appendix, he will find, that "Gilbert Murray archdeacon, afterwards bi-

shop of Murray, translated the Psalms and Gospels into the Irish language and Scots Gaelic, in the twelfth century." He may here observe, that the Irish language and the Scots Gaelic are used as synonymous terms. This, I have already taken notice, is a very improper way of speaking; but as it has been sometimes a practice, on account of the very inconsiderable difference between these two dialects of the ancient Celtic, to express the one by the other, it is sufficient to destroy the effect intended by our traveller, from the authority of Martin, in the following passage.

'We heard,' he goes on, 'of manuscripts that were, or that had been, in the hands of somebody's father, or grandfather; but at last we had no reason to believe they were other than Irish. Martin mentions Irish, but never any Erse manuscripts, to be found in the islands in his time.'

The Doctor repeats the same thing so often, that, in following him through the progress of his Journey, I find myself likewise led into tautologies, for which I must beg the reader's indulgence.

Had he inquired of the proper people, he would not have heard such a vague account of manuscripts, as that they only 'were, or had been in the hands of somebody's father, or grandfather.' He would have met with gentlemen, who could have shown him there were manuscripts in their

own hands; and that they had been transmitted in their families, through the hands of a long series of forefathers. But the laugh, which the Doctor means to excite, by this mode of expression, is lost in the improbability of the fact which he relates. We behold, therefore, the harmless but pitiful trick of an old man, who hopes, but without effect, to cheat his reader into the belief of a fiction, by an attempt to put him first in good humour.

Though the manuscripts I have already mentioned are sufficient to establish the antiquity, as well as the great diversity of writing in the Gaelic language, I shall here add a few observations more; and hope it will be the last time I shall have occasion to resume any discussion on the same subject.

There are still many other manuscripts in the Highlands, both in verse and prose, which are of great antiquity, and of which I shall take notice only of a few.

Among the former, in particular, are a poem called Côachac na Srôna, and the Aged Bard's Wish, both of which have been lately published. These, with a variety of others, seem to go as far back as the ages of hunting; for they contain not the smallest allusion to agriculture, or any of the modern arts of life. Among other circumstances of a very ancient nature, some of them make frequent mention of a species of deer, which has been

extinct in the Highlands for some centuries; and of which we know nothing now but from these poems, and from their huge heads and horns, which are often dug up in our bogs and mosses. Many will understand, that the creature I mean is the Lŏn; which was probably a species of the elk or moose deer.

But to relieve our peregrinator, at once, from his "wild goose chase" after manuscripts, of which he could only learn that they formerly had been in somebody's hands, I will refer him to two gentlemen, who will give him a more positive information. Dr. Alexander Campbell in Argyleshire, will, among other things, make him acquainted with a very old manuscript in Gaelic character, which makes a large volume of a quarto size; and which, with a variety of other subjects, gives a particular account of the feuds which had formerly subsisted between the families of Fion (or Fingal) and Gaul.

Dr. Campbell is, in every other view, a very respectable character; and his great age, being now upwards of eighty years, has enabled him, in particular, to acquire a very extensive knowledge of the antiquities of his country. He was told by his father, the celebrated Mr. Colin Campbell, minister of Ardchattan, a man eminent for learning in general, and for mathematical and antiquarian

knowledge in particular, that the greatest part of the books of value belonging to Iona, in the latter centuries, were carried to Doway in French Flanders; where the Scots had a seminary, which still continues. Here the curious will, no doubt, find something worth the trouble of inquiry.

The other gentleman I intend to mention, and who, after the many testimonies already produced, shall be the last authority I will advance on the subject of Gaelic manuscripts, is Mr. Maclachlan of Kilbride. He has been esteemed, and very deservedly, one of the greatest antiquarians, of his time, in the Highlands; and our traveller will find in his family a variety of Gaelic manuscripts and fragments, which have been transmitted, from father to son, for many generations.

As for the antiquity of learning and writing in general, in Scotland, it is universally acknowledged by all nations; and notwithstanding the many misfortunes which have befallen the works of our learned men, there still remain convincing proofs, that we had our full proportion of them in former times. I shall but slightly touch upon a few particulars.

The Doctor will startle, perhaps, when he is told, that Gildas was born at Dumbarton, which is still the capital of a Highland county. Cumineus and Adamnanus were abbots of Iona; and besides

the Life of St. Columba, they wrote other historical treatises. They flourished above eleven hundred years ago; and their writings that remain are sustained as genuine by all the learned in Europe. They wrote before the Saxon historian Bede. Could we recover more of what has been anciently written at Iona, there is good authority for believing, that we should find the lives, deaths, and chief actions of their kings, who, before the union of the Scottish and Pictish kingdoms, used to be crowned and buried there, recorded by those and other religionists of that renowned seminary.

An author of the twelfth century mentions Scots records, as then reckoned ancient. He was contemporary with Andrew bishop of Caithness, who died in 1185, and is quoted by Camden. This writer, in a description of Albany, the ancient name of Scotland, speaks of our histories to this effect. "We read," says he, "in the histories and chronicles of the ancient Britons, and in the ancient achievements and annals of the Scots and Picts," &c. This, I presume, will satisfy the most scrupulous, that writings, which could be called ancient by an author of the twelfth age, must have been of no short standing.

In the last cited page, 'I suppose,' says our traveller, "my opinion of the poems of Ossian is already discovered.' Indeed! There is no need.

surely, for a very uncommon degree of penetration to make this discovery. The cloven foot has appeared long ago; and a man must be very dull, who could not perceive which way it pointed. To render the authenticity of those poems suspicious, was the great object of his Journey; and to facilitate the execution of that project, has he toiled so much beforehand in discrediting Highland learning and narration. How far he has succeeded in the preparatory part, the public will judge from what has gone before; with what effect he makes a more direct attack upon the poems themselves, will appear from what follows.

I shall only premise, that I will not here, as on other occasions, quote the particular objections of our traveller, and answer them one by one; but continue the thread of observation, without any interruption, and with as little personal application as possible. The malignity of a few others, the prejudices of several, and the weakness of many have suggested similar objections to the authenticity of Ossian's poems, which have lately come to my hands. I shall therefore endeavour to obviate the whole upon the same general ground.

The concurrent testimony of a whole people, and the evidence of many respectable individuals,

laid before the public by that elegant writer and respectable clergyman, Dr. Blair, have been found incapable, it seems, to satisfy the minds of men, who are unwilling to give credit to any thing calculated to reflect honour on the ancestors of the Scotch nation. To persuade such men of the truth of any fact, which they are resolved not to believe, is beyond my wish, as well as my expectation. But as many candid and well-meaning persons have been seduced into an error, by the bold assertions of the prejudiced and incredulous, I shall examine, in a succinct manner, the objections on which they found their want of faith.

Some derive an objection to the authenticity of Ossian's poems, from an alleged superciliousness in Mr. Macpherson, in refusing satisfaction on that head, to every writer, with or without a name, who chooses to demand that satisfaction, at the bar of the public. Though I am told that superciliousness is no part of Mr. Macpherson's character, I think he has a right to assume it on such occasions. To answer the queries of the prejudiced would have no effect; and there can be no end to solving the difficulties started by the ignorant. The most loud and clamorous are generally those who are least entitled to satisfaction; and were Mr. Macpherson to descend into

a controversy, upon a mere matter of fact, he would, in a manner, leave truth to the decision of sophistry.

Mr. Macpherson has done all that could, or ought to be expected. He has never refused the examination or perusal of his manuscripts to persons of taste and knowledge in the Celtic language. These are the best, if not the only judges of the subject; and as these are perfectly satisfied as to the authenticity of the poems, Mr. Macpherson has a right to be totally indifferent to the incredulity of others.

To extend the opportunity of judging for themselves, to such as are conversant in the language of the ancient Scots, and yet have no opportunity of examining Mr. Macpherson's originals, he has published the seventh book of Temora. He went further. He published proposals for printing all the poems by subscription; but, as no subscribers appeared, he justly took it as the sense of the public, that the authenticity, as being a matter of such general notoriety, was absolutely and decisively admitted.

The specimen, which the translator has published, carries to my mind, and, I trust, I have some right to form a judgment on such subjects, a thorough conviction, that the seventh book of Temora is not of Mr. Macpherson's composition.

If it had been of his own composition, how could he mistake the meaning of a passage in it, as it is evident he has done? To every Highlander, to every man of candour in any country, this is a decisive proof of the authenticity of the poems. Neither the bold assertions of the prejudiced, nor all the sophistry of criticism, can persuade the world, that any man can mistake the meaning of what he has written himself.

But though the poems of Ossian bear every internal mark of originality, though they convey no ideas, exhibit no ornaments, contain no sentiments, which are not peculiarly Celtic, according to the accounts we have received of Celtic manners from the ancients, WE, the natives of the Highlands, and we certainly must be allowed to be the best judges of the matter, do not found their authenticity on internal proofs. Every man of inquiry, every person of the least taste for the poetry, or turn for the antiquities of his country, has heard often repeated some part or other of the poems published by Mr. Macpherson. Hundreds still alive have heard portions of them recited, long before Mr. Macpherson was born; so that he cannot possibly be deemed the author of compositions, which existed before he had any existence himself.

It is true, there is no man now living, and

perhaps there never has existed any one person, who either can or could repeat the whole of the poems of Ossian. It is enough, that the whole has been repeated, in detached pieces, through the Highlands and isles. Mr. Macpherson's great merit has been the collecting the *disjecta membra poetæ;* and his fitting the parts so well together, as to form a complete figure. Even the perfect symmetry of that figure has been produced, as an argument against its antiquity. But arguments are lost, and facts are thrown away, upon men, who have predetermined to resist conviction itself.

In vain has it been alleged, that the age of hunting, in which the Fingalians are said to have lived, cannot be supposed to have cultivated poetry. This objection is started by men, who are more acquainted with books than human nature. But had they even consulted their books, they might have received a complete answer to their objection. The Scandinavians, who lived in a country almost as unfit for pasture as for the plough, excelled in the beautiful and sublime of poetry. Their war songs, their funeral elegies, their love sonnets, convey more exalted ideas of magnanimity, melancholy, and tenderness, than the most laboured compositions of Greece and Rome, on the same subjects. The allusions are

few and simple; but they are calculated to impress the mind with that "glow of feeling," which springs only from genuine poetry.

Are the Indians of America any more than mere hunters? Yet who can deny them a claim to the possession of poetry? Their whole language seems to be, as it were, infected with poetical metaphor. Their orations at their Congresses, upon matters of business, are all in the poetical style. They resemble more the speeches in the Iliad, than those dry syllogistical disquisitions, which have banished all the beautiful simplicity of eloquence from modern public assemblies.

Besides, is there any person acquainted with the natives of the Highlands, who does not know, that such persons as are most addicted to hunting, are most given to poetry? One of the best songs preserved in Macdonald's collection of Gaelic poems, is altogether on the subject of hunting, and the date of its composition is so old, that it lies beyond the reach of tradition itself. The solitary life of a hunter is peculiarly adapted to that melancholy, but spirited and magnificent turn of thought, which distinguishes our ancient poetry.

But it is not necessary to consider the Fingalians as mere hunters. We frequently find in

Ossian's poems allusions to flocks and herds; and a pastoral life has been universally allowed to have been peculiarly favourable to the muse. I could never see, for my own part, any reason for supposing that agriculture itself was unknown in the days of Ossian, though it is not mentioned in his poems. With a contempt for every thing but the honour acquired by the sword, he perhaps considered the plough as too mean an instrument to be alluded to in compositions chiefly intended to animate the soul to war.

The dignified sentiments, the exalted manners, the humanity, moderation, generosity, gallantry, and tenderness for the fair sex, which are so conspicuous in the poems of Ossian, have been brought as arguments against their authenticity. These objections, however, proceed either from an ignorance of history, a want of knowledge of human nature, or those confined notions concerning the character of ages and nations, which are too often entertained in certain universities. With the literature of Greece and Rome, they imbibe such an exalted idea of classic character, as induces them to consign to ignorance and barbarism, all antiquity beyond the pales of the Greek and Roman empires.

But had they consulted the history of other nations, they might find that the want of refine-

ment, which is called barbarism, does not absolutely prove the want of noble and generous qualities of the mind. The powers of the soul are in every country the same. Why then should not the Celtic Druid be as capable of impressing useful instruction on the followers of his religion, as the barefooted Selli,* who sacrificed to Jupiter on the cold top of Dodona? Or, by what prescription has the neighbourhood of the Hellespont a right to sentiments more exalted than those of the chieftain who inhabits the coast of the Vergivian ocean? Have not many nations, who have been called barbarians, excelled the Romans in valour, and in that most exalted of all virtues, a sincere love for their country?

Have not even the Canadians of North America, with fewer opportunities of improvement than the Fingalians, been found to possess almost all the virtues celebrated in the poems of Ossian?† Why, therefore, should we deny to the ancient Caledonians what we cannot refuse to the modern neighbours of the Eskimeaux.

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* The Selli were certainly as unpolished as any Druid, in the most barbarous and sequestered parts of the Highlands and Scottish isles.

——————Ἀμφὶ δὲ Σελλοὶ
Σοὶ ναίουσ᾽ ὑποφῆται ἀνιπτόποδες, χαμαιεῦναι.

Iliad xvi. v. 234, 235.

† Abbe de Raynal, tom. iv.

The truth is, that the resemblance at least, of all the virtues contained in the poems of Ossian, and which are probably exaggerated in the usual manner of poetry, still remains in the Highlands of Scotland. The valour of the Highlanders is allowed by their greatest enemies; and the most prejudiced cannot accuse them of cruelty. Battle seems always to have been more their object than the rewards of victory. In the social virtues, the lowest Highlander is not, even in this age, deficient. He is civil, attentive, and hospitable to strangers, in a degree unknown in any other country; and as to matrimonial fidelity and attachment, and delicacy towards women, the Highlanders are exceeded by none; I mean such of them as have not improved their manners into a neglect of trivial virtues, by a frequent intercourse with Dr. Johnson's countrymen.

In ancient times, the Highlanders had much better opportunities to learn exalted sentiments, if such must be learned, than in later ages. The most prejudiced of our opponents will allow, that refinement is in every country, in a certain degree, an inseparable appendage of a court. In the days of Fingal, and for many ages after him, the Highlands were the seat of government. After the extinction, or rather the conquest of the Picts, the kings of the Scots fixed their residence in the

low country. When the southern parts of Scotland were wrested from the Saxons and Danes, an extension of territory and the danger of a southern enemy carried the seat of government still further from the Highlanders. This circumstance had certainly its weight in depriving the posterity of the Fingalians of some part of that exalted character, which distinguished their ancestors. But their retaining still so many of the virtues celebrated by Ossian, is certainly a good argument, that those virtues might have existed in their perfection, in more favourable times.

But there is little occasion for speculative reasoning on a matter which is so well established by fact. A whole people give their testimony to the existence of the poems of Ossian; and gentlemen of the first reputation for veracity, and a capacity to judge of the subject, have long ago permitted their names to be given to the public, as vouchers for many parts of the collection published by Mr. Macpherson. Many more are ready to join their testimony to that already given to the world. The truth is, that even the defending a matter of such notoriety, is the most plausible argument that the prejudiced could have brought against the authenticity of the poems.

To put the matter beyond the contradiction

of the prejudiced, and the unbelief of the most incredulous,' I am glad to be able to inform the public, that the whole of the poems of Ossian are speedily to be printed in the original Gaelic. In vain will it be said by Dr. Johnson and others, who have manifestly resolved not to believe the authenticity of the poems, that the same man, who could invent them in English, might clothe them in a Celtic dress. To this I answer, that it would be impossible for any person, let his talents be ever so great, to impose a translation for an original, on any critic in the Gaelic language.

Dr. Johnson will certainly permit me to ask him, Whether any of his countrymen could imitate the language of the age of Chaucer, so as to pass his own work for a composition of those times? Dr. Johnson's critical knowledge of the English language would spurn the idea; but I will venture to assure the Doctor, that we have, among us, several persons as conversant in the old Gaelic, as he himself is in the tongue of the ancient Saxons.

In the arrangement of the whole work, and even in the improvement of particular passages, the public are perhaps indebted to the taste and judgment of Mr. Macpherson. Being perfectly master of all the traditions relative to the Fingalian times, he has, no doubt, availed himself of that advantage, in placing the poems in their most

natural order; and in restoring the scattered members of such pieces, as he found floating on tradition only, to their original stations. As he collected some parts of the poems from what Dr. Johnson would call the "recitation of the aged," in different parts of the country, he was certainly excusable in taking the "best readings in all the editions," if the expression may be used.

Thus far we will admit, that Mr. Macpherson is the author of the poems. But more we will neither grant to him, nor to Dr. Johnson; who seems not to be aware of the compliment he pays to a writer, who, by meriting his envy, has excited his malevolence.

It has upon the whole appeared, that the knowledge of letters was introduced into the Highlands and Hebrides, in as early a period of time as into any of the neighbouring countries. That one of the first uses made of those letters was the recording of works of genius, as well as public events. That, as a collateral security for handing down the compositions of the poet, as well as the facts related by the historian, there were bards and senachies, educated in academies, and retained afterwards by the principal families in the Highlands and isles. That those bards and senachies were not an illiterate race of men, apt to corrupt poetry and mistake facts. That both of them could, and

actually did write the Gaelic language, without receiving their knowledge of letters through the medium of any other tongue. That the bards and senachies were so far from becoming extinct some centuries ago, that a few of them still exist. That, besides the regular and retained bards and senachies, there were many other persons, who executed the duties of their offices, through a particular turn of genius, or an attachment to the antiquities and poetry of their country. That of these several still exist; and many more were existing a few years ago. That the business of the established bards and senachies, as well as of those who followed the professions of both through pleasure, was to transmit poetry and history to posterity, sometimes by writing, but oftener by oral tradition. That the poems of Ossian have been handed down by these means, from age to age, to the present times. That, in old times, no doubt of their authenticity was ever entertained; and that there are still existing many hundreds, nay, many thousands, who are ready to attest their coming down to them, from antiquity, with all the proofs necessary to establish an indubitable fact.

The Doctor concludes his observations on the poems of Ossian, by passing two very severe reflections; the one of a personal, the other of a national

kind. As what he says is pretty remarkable, I shall give it in his own words.

Page 183. 'I have yet,' says he, 'supposed no imposture but in the publisher;' and, a little after, he adds, 'The Scots have something to plead for their easy reception of an improbable fiction: they are seduced by their fondness for their supposed ancestors. A Scotchman must be a very sturdy moralist, who does not love Scotland better than truth; he will always love it better than inquiry: and if falsehood flatters his vanity, will not be very diligent to detect it.'

As an imposture is the last thing of which a gentleman can be supposed guilty, it is the last thing with which he ought to be charged. To bring forward such an accusation, therefore, without proof to establish it, is a ruffian mode of impeachment, which seems to have been reserved for Dr. Johnson. There is nothing in his Journey to the Hebrides to support so gross a calumny, unless we admit his own bare assertions for arguments; and the publisher, if by the publisher he means Mr. Macpherson, is certainly as incapable of an imposture, as the Doctor is of candour or good manners.

The indelicacy of such language is obvious. A gentleman would not have expressed himself

in that manner, for his own sake; a man of prudence would not have done it, for fear of giving just offence to Mr. Macpherson. But the Doctor seems to have been careless about the reputation of the first of those characters; and the malignity of his disposition seems to have made him overlook the foresight generally annexed to the second. Though he was bold in his assertions, however, I do not find he has been equally courageous in their defence. His mere allegation on a subject, which he could not possibly understand, was unworthy of the notice of the gentleman accused; but the language, in which he expressed his doubts, deserved chastisement. To prevent this, he had age and infirmities to plead; but not content with that security, which, I dare venture to say, was sufficient, he declared, when questioned, that he would call the laws of his country to his aid. Men, who make a breach upon the laws of good manners, have but a scurvy claim to the protection of any other laws.

Nor will our traveller come better off with the public, in his more general assault. No man, whose opinion is worth the regarding, will give credit to so indiscriminate a calumny: the Doctor, therefore, has exhibited this specimen of his rancour to no other purpose, than either to gratify the prejudiced, or to impose upon the weak

and credulous. If any thing can be inferred from what he says, it is only this, that he himself is not so very sturdy a moralist as to love truth so much as he hates Scotland.

Soon after this, he tells us, that he left Skye to visit some other islands. But as his observations, through that part of his Journey, present nothing new, I shall not follow him in his progress; and the reader, I believe, as well as myself, will have no objection to be relieved, from his long attendance on so uncouth a companion. We shall leave him, therefore, to rail, in the old way, at the poverty, ignorance, and barbarity of the inhabitants; while, with a peculiar consistency, he acknowledges plenty, intelligence, and politeness, every where. Neither shall we disturb his meditations among the ruins of Iona; but permit him to tread that once hallowed spot with reverential awe, and demonstrate the true spirit of his faith, by mourning over the 'dilapidated monuments of ancient sanctity.'

When he tells us, page 250, that men bred in the universities of Scotland obtain only a mediocrity of knowledge between learning and ignorance, he contradicts his own attestations to the contrary in a thousand different places. I formerly compared this passage with his eulogiums on the Highland clergy; I must now contrast it

with what he mentions in two or three pages after. 'We now,' says he, 'returned to Edinburgh, where I passed some days with men of learning, whose names want no advancement from my commemoration.' It was somewhat careless in the Doctor, to say no worse, to hold so very different a language in page 252, while the censure passed on our universities, but so little before, must be recent in the reader's memory. But a regard to the trifling forms of consistency seems never to have been an object of his attention.

It happens luckily, however, that the reputation of the Scots for learning rests upon a better foundation than the opinion of Dr. Johnson. The testimony of the world is in their favour; and, against that, his praise or censure can have but little weight. The three learned professions bear witness to their knowledge and talents. In physic they stand unrivalled; and in the pulpit and at the bar, they have no superiors.

But besides professional merit, the Scots have long occupied every other department of literature; and they have distinguished themselves in each. The province of history is, in a manner, yielded up to them; they have added largely to the various stores of philosophy and the mathematics; and, in criticism and the Belles Lettres,

they have discovered abilities, and acquired applause. Though they seldom descend to the ludicrous, yet they have not wanted writers, who have made some figure in that walk. If the Doctor doubts the fact, I shall refer him, for information, to the author of Lexiphanes.

I shall now take my final leave of Dr. Johnson. That he set out with an intention to traduce the Scots nation, is evident; and the account he gives of his Journey shows, with what a stubborn malignity he persevered in that purpose. Every line is marked with prejudice; and every sentence teems with the most illiberal invectives. If he has met with some correction, in the course of this examination, it is no more than he ought to have expected; unless he feels in his own mind, what his pride perhaps will not allow him to acknowledge, that misrepresentation and abuse merit no passion superior to contempt.



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